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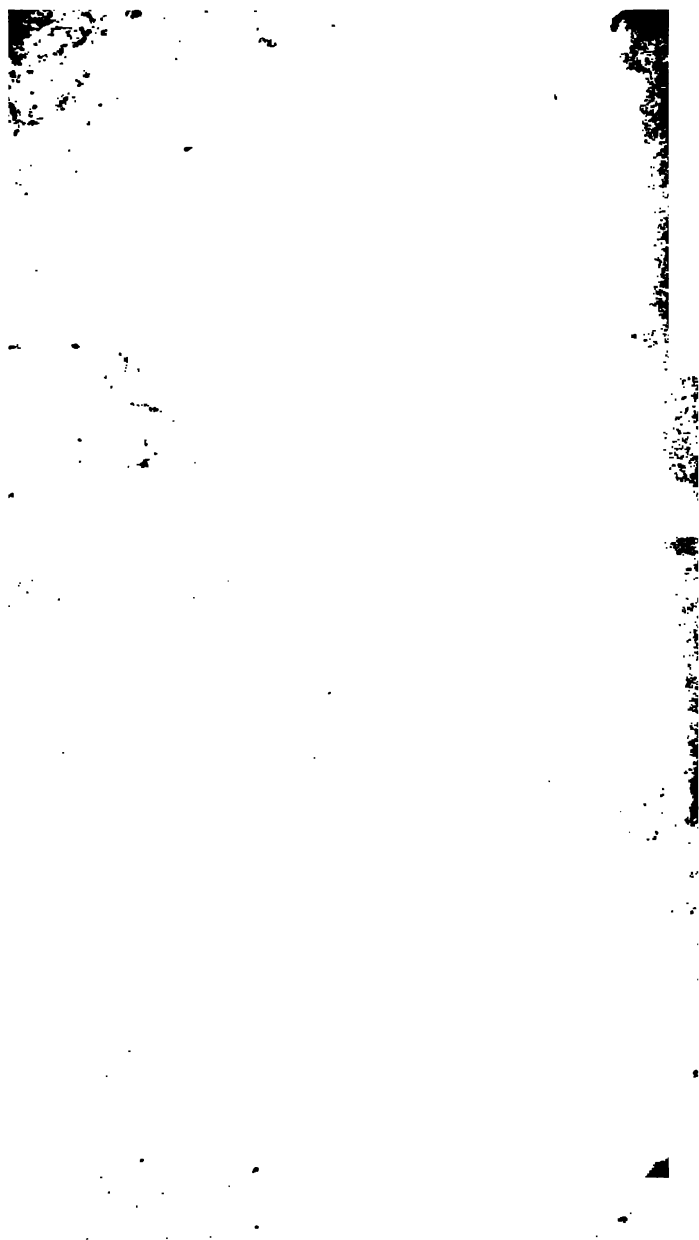
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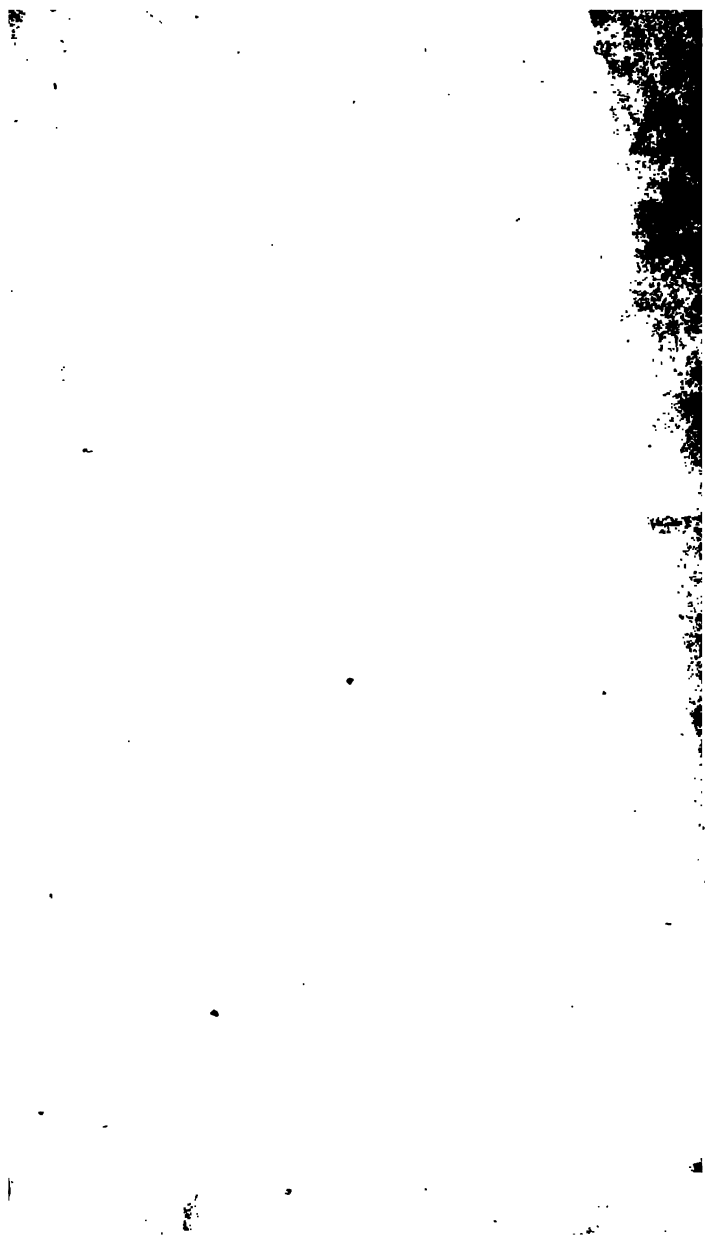
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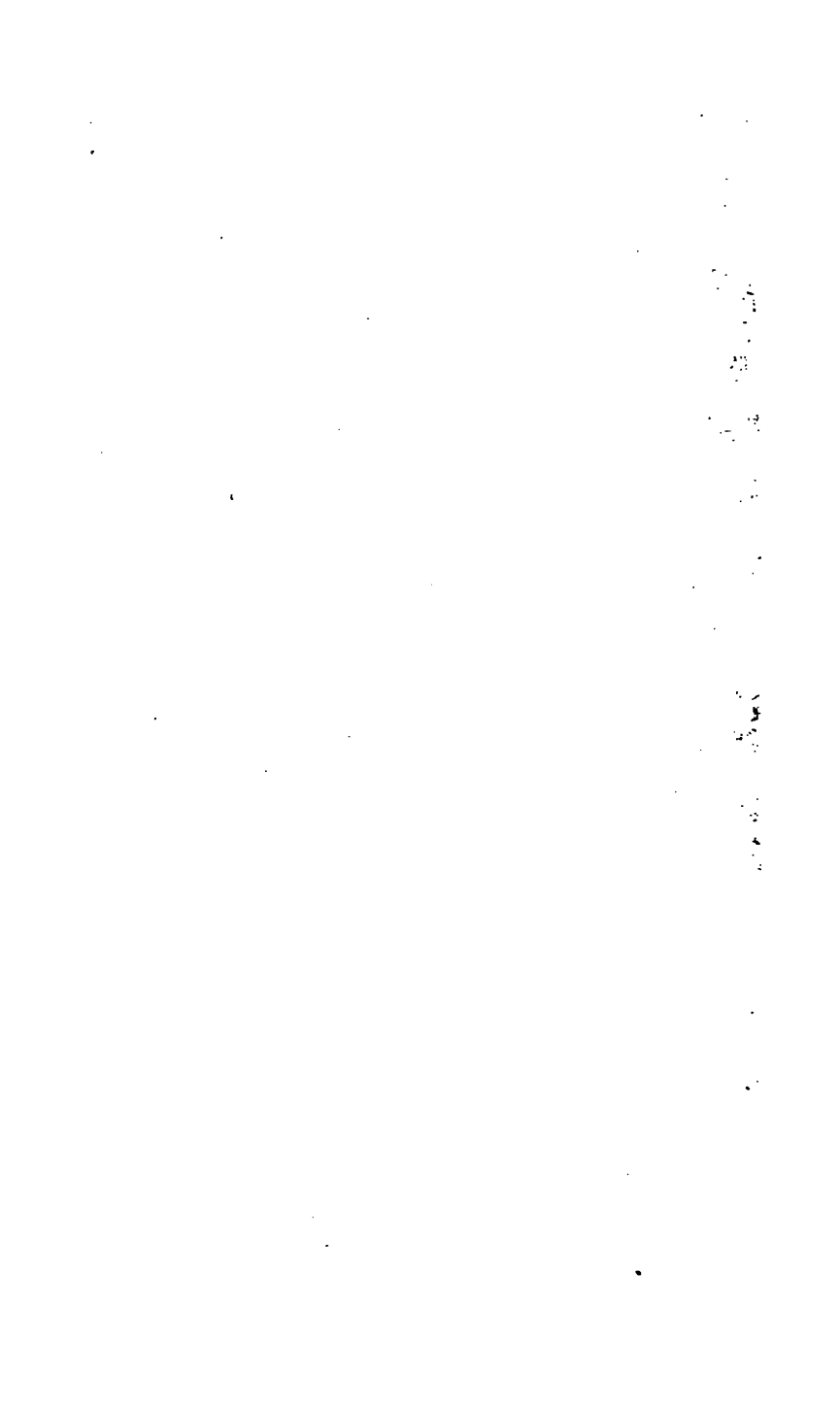
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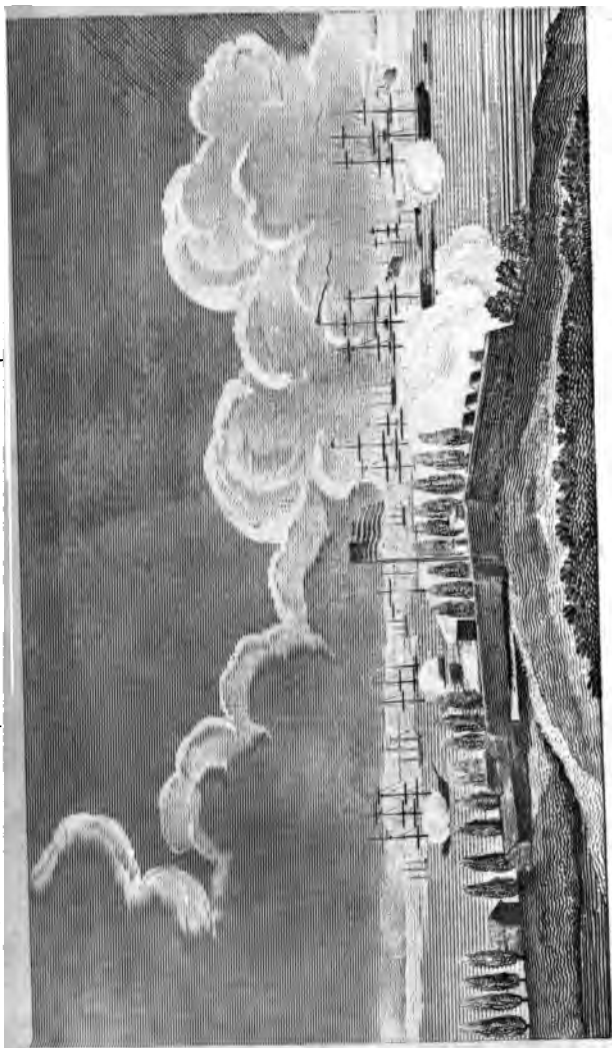












BOMBARDMENT OF FORT MIFFLIN

HISTORY
OF
THE LATE WAR,
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN.
CONTAINING
A MINUTE ACCOUNT OF
THE VARIOUS
Military and Naval Operations.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PLATES.

BY H. M. BRACKENRIDGE, ESQ.

Fourth Edition,
REVISED AND CORRECTED



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DISTRICT OF MARYLAND, ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on this twentieth day of January, in the forty-first year of the independence of the United States of America, Joseph Cushing, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

SEAL. "History of the Late War, between the United States and Great Britain.—Containing a minute account of the various Military and Naval Operations.—Illustrated with plates.—By H. M. Brackenridge, esq."

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned." And also to the act entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

PHILIP MOORE,
Clerk of the district of Maryland.

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INTRODUCTION.

ONE amongst the numerous artifices, which the selfishness of European nations has put in practice, the better to retain the American colonies in a slavish subjection, or what amounts to the same thing, in a state of perpetual non-age, has been to claim over them a *maternal authority or prerogative*. If this fiction imposed upon them the obligation of treating the colonies with tenderness and affection, the colonies might regard it as innocent, if not salutary; but it is used to cover the cruel iniquity of fastening on their necks the yoke of conquest. The self-styled mother, without a spark of that affection which exists, as a law of nature, in the breast of every creature, would inculcate, that, on our part, to refuse the most implicit and slavish obedience, to whatever dispositions she may choose to make of our persons or estates, to her sole and exclusive benefit, is no less than filial impiety. That the opposition of the colonies to the most glaring abuse of power, was in them the conduct of wicked and unnatural children; that remonstrance was insolence, and resistance atrocity. From no better source than this idle fiction, proceed the invectives lavished on the colonies, for manfully resenting the indignities that have been offered them.

It is time that this shallow artifice should be exposed. It has encouraged the nations of Europe to make their unwarranted demands upon us, and it has too often withheld our arm from opposing them, in the manner that we ought. As a poetick fiction, it might serve to amuse the

fancy. It was first invented by the colonist himself, to express his affection for the soil of his nativity, or the birth place of his ancestors; for who is there that ceases to love the spot from which he is an exile? He little thought that he was contriving a fiction, which would enable the inhabitants of that paternal soil, his kinsmen, to claim the privileges of masters; they could feel no affection for his exile, or the land which received him. So strongly has this fiction fastened itself upon all our thoughts, that it has become necessary to make an effort to shake it off, and return to simple truth. Are the present inhabitants of the British isles, the fathers, or mothers of the Americans? Are they brothers, or cousins, or tenth-cousins? No: we sprang from the same stock, have a common ancestry, and that is all. We have as much right to claim a parental prerogative over Englishmen, as they have to claim it over us.

These states, once British colonies, were for the most part, established by persons who fled from persecution, and at the private expense of the colonists. They were suffered to struggle with the difficulties incident to their new situation, and after they had thus grown up in neglect, and become possessed of what might tempt the cupidity of the European mother, she assumed the arbitrary power of "binding them in all cases whatsoever," in other words, she declared them in a state of vassalage.

In leaving the land of our forefathers, already crowded with population, our condition was improved, at the same time that a corresponding benefit accrued to the mother country, in the creation of new marts for her trade. We carried with us the language, the laws, the literature, the "free born thoughts," of our ancestors, to which we were as much entitled, as the islanders, whom we left in possession of the *natale solum*. We left behind, indeed, many customs and institutions, not suited to our new situation, or which we considered as useless. Admitting that the infancy of the colonies was protected by the European state; does this create a debt of gratitude never to be repaid? Does it authorise the treating of the colonies as subjugated countries. The European states have been long ago repaid a thousand fold. The

new world has been continually pouring forth her treasures, to be lavished in distant wars, to be expended in courtly extravagance, or to contribute to the comfort of myriads across the Atlantick. The colonies were fostered from *interest*, never from *affection*. The conduct of the European state, far from being that of a mother, has been that of a wicked guardian, whose only wish is to lengthen the pupillage of his ward, that he may riot in his estate. Away then with the trash of filial obedience in the colonies, unnatural children, unnatural wars, or maternal prerogative.

The obstinate persistance of Great Britain in her pretensions to this prerogative, first broke the ties of dependence, which it was so much her interest to preserve, and her subsequent illiberal policy, has tended to weaken the influence of affinity, which a true wisdom would have taught her to cherish. Why is it that the enmity of those, between whom there naturally exist the most numerous bonds of friendship, is the most bitter? It is because each of these is a distinct cord, which may vibrate to the feelings of hatred, as well as of love. With China, with Turkey, with France, we may be governed by temporary and varying policy, but towards England we can never feel indifference. Why then has England taken so much pains, to make us hate her as a nation? The grievances of which we have to complain, by frequent recital, have grown wearisome to the ear. There always existed, and still exist, numerous ties to attach us to Britain, which nothing but her ungenerous and unnatural policy, can weaken or destroy. Her wisest and best men foretold to her, the consequences of the usurpations which led to our independence, and yet she still continued to afflict us, with every species of irritating and insulting deportment, and then at last complained of our unnatural conduct, in refusing to bear it any longer.

With the acknowledgement of our independence, Great Britain did not renounce her designs of subjugating America. Force had been found unavailing, she next resolved to try what might be done by fraud. For many years after the peace of 1783, our affairs wore no promising appearance. The confederation, which bound the

states during their struggle against a common enemy, was too feeble to hold them together in a time of peace. The cement of our union being thus taken away, England foresaw what we had to encounter, and prophesying according to her wishes, solaced herself with the hope of seeing us divided and engaged in civil broils. The seeds of dissention had been abundantly sown, our state of finance was deplorably defective; it might almost be said, that the nation was at an end, for so many jarring interests discovered themselves in the states, as almost to preclude the hope of reducing these discordant elements to harmony and order. A state of anarchy and civil war might restore us to Great Britain. Happily for America, she possessed at this moment, a galaxy of sages and patriots, who held a powerful influence over the minds of their fellow-citizens. By their exertions, a spirit of compromise and accommodation was introduced, which terminated in our present glorious compact. A second revolution, which secured to us the benefits of the first.

By this event Great Britain lost, for a time, the opportunity of tampering with the individual states, of fomenting jealousies, and of governing by division. Her policy was changed; it became a favourite idea, that our growth should be repressed, and so many impediments thrown in our way, as to convince us, that we had gained nothing in becoming free. We soon experienced the effects of her disappointment. Contrary to express stipulation, she refused to surrender the western posts, and, at the same time, secretly instigated the savages to murder the frontier settlers. Spain was, at this very moment, practising her intrigues to draw off the western states from the confederacy, of which there is little doubt England would soon have availed herself.

But we also came in contact with Britain on the ocean; our commerce began to flourish, and on the breaking out of the French war, she found in us formidable rivals. In order to put a stop to this competition, she called into life the odious, and almost obsolete rule of '56, which is in palpable violation of the law of nations. The spirit of this rule is to prevent the neutral from enjoying any commerce, which would not, at the same time, be open to

the belligerent; in other words, to permit no neutral. In practice, it was carried to the full extent. The orders in council of the eighth January, 1793, became the source of a thousand vexations to American commerce; and yet was in a manner tolerable, compared to those of the sixth of November, which were secretly circulated among the British cruisers, authorising them to capture, "all vessels laden with the produce of any of the colonies of France, or carrying provisions or supplies to the said colony." The greater part of our commerce was at once swept from the ocean. No diversity of opinion, among our merchants, prevailed on this occasion. They expressed themselves in the strongest terms, against this treacherous and wicked procedure. The war of the revolution had not been forgotten, that with the savages still raged; it was not by such acts, we could be induced to entertain a friendly feeling towards England. There prevailed a universal clamour for war, among the merchants particularly, and which required all the firmness of Washington to withstand. This great man had marked out to himself the wise policy, of keeping aloof from European politicks, and of avoiding all entanglements in their wars. Mr. Jay was despatched as a special messenger, with orders to remonstrate in a manly tone. This mission terminated in the celebrated treaty of 1794, and which was sanctioned by the nation, although not without great reluctance. It appeared in the sequel, that we had only shoved aside a war, in order to recommence disputes concerning the same causes.

The British did little more than modify their orders in council, by those issued in 1795 and '98. In fact, down to the peace of Amiens, the same vexations and abuses furnished a constant theme of remonstrance. Neither general Washington, nor Mr. Adams, was able to arrange our differences with England, or induce her to consult her own true interests, by a just and liberal policy towards us. From this we may fairly infer, that no administration of our government could have succeeded in accommodating our differences upon just and equitable principles.

Another cause of complaint, proceeded *pari pasu* with the violations of our commercial and maritime rights, and of a nature still more vexatious. It is one upon which American feeling has always been much alive. Great Britain is the only modern nation, who does not consider the flag as protecting every person who sails under it; and we are the only people who have, during peace, been dragged from our ships on the high seas, by christian nations, and condemned to servitude. This intolerable outrage grew up from a small beginning, by imprudent acquiescence on our part; perhaps not conceiving it possible, that it could ever assume its present hideous front. At first, it was a claim to search our merchant vessels for deserters from the publick service of Britain; next, it became a right to impress English seamen, who had engaged themselves in American ships; finally, every person who could not prove on the spot, to the satisfaction of the lieutenant who came on board, that he was an American, was carried away into a most hateful bondage. England had gone far, in asserting the right to search a neutral vessel for enemy's goods; a right which can only be regarded as an exception to the general rule, that ships of neutrals on the high seas are as inviolable as the neutral territory; a right, which had been successively opposed by all the maritime states, excepting the one which claimed the sovereignty of the seas; a strong proof that it was but an abuse of power. But this claim of *searching for men*, is unsupported by any writer on the publick law, or by one good reason. She had no more right to claim her subjects from our ships, than from our territory. Whatever right she might have, to prevent them from quitting the country, at times when their services were required, or of punishing for doing so, she had no right to pursue into our country, or demand them from us, unless warranted by express treaty. But what she had no right to demand, she had a right to take by force! When closely pressed, she deigned at last to give some reasons in support of her practice—she must have men to man her thousand ships—she was contending for her existence—we had no right to employ her seamen—our flag had no regard to her interests—our

employment of foreign seamen was not regulated—our sufferings were the consequences of our own imprudence—These are the only arguments, that can be used in support of such a practice. If England says she must have men, we answer that we must have men also. That we also are contending for our existence, although we do not consider ourselves authorized on that account, to rob our neighbours, or make them slaves. If she say that we had no right to employ her seamen—we can answer, that she had no right to employ ours. Why, I would ask, were we under any greater obligations to consult her interest, than she considered herself to consult ours? The fact is, that no nation in the world employs a greater number of foreign seamen than Great Britain, in her immense commerce, and in her immense navy; *and she has a right to employ them*, not because she is contending for her existence, or fighting the battles of the world, but because the thing is lawful in itself. So far from restricting herself, or *regulating* the practice, or consulting the *interests* of others, she consults only her own interests, and holds out inticements to foreign seamen, which no other nation does. Here, then, is a simple question; how comes that to be unlawful in America, which is lawful in Britain? Would not Great Britain protect an American seaman, who has been made an Englishman by being two years in her service? There is, in fact, nothing in the American practice to justify reprisals. The employment of English seamen, who voluntarily tender their services, is lawful, however disagreeable it may be to England. How far a friendly feeling towards that country may induce us to consult her convenience and interests, or how far our own weakness or interest may require us to wave our rights, is another matter.

This is placing the subject in the least reprehensible view, as respects England. But when we come to examine the matter in which this pretended right was exercised by her, it cannot be doubted for a moment, that the whole was a mere pretext to vex our commerce, and recruit for her navy from American ships. This is evident, from the uniform practice of impressing men of all

nations, found in them, Spaniards, Portuguese, Danes, Russians, Hollanders, and even negroes. It was, in fact, an insult to every nation in the civilized world. *Tros Tyriusque nullo*, was the motto, although not exactly in the proper sense. The British practice amounted to subjecting the crew of every American vessel, to be drawn up before a lieutenant of the navy, that he might choose out such as suited his purpose. The good sailor was uniformly an Englishman, and the lubber, an American. It has been said, that the number of impressed Americans has been exaggerated; was there no exaggeration as to the number of Englishmen in American service? Is it then of more importance, that Great Britain should prevent a few of her seamen from escaping into a foreign service, than it is to us, that free Americans should be doomed to the worst of slavery?

England has never known the full extent of the sensations produced in America, by the practice of impressment. The influence of party spirit has contributed to deceive her. The great body of Americans have always felt this outrage to their persons, with the keenest indignation; no American administration would ever express a different sentiment. Let her look to the Roman history, to see what effect is produced in a nation of freemen, by the ill usage of one of its citizens! She is not aware, that an humble American citizen is a personage of more importance, than an obscure British subject can be; and greatly is she mistaken, if she supposes that the outcry against her conduct was a mere party trick: it was deeply felt, as an egregious insult. She did not know that the American seamen were, in general, of a different class from her own; more decently brought up, of better families and morals, and many of them looking forward, after the expiration of their apprenticeships, to be mates and captains of vessels; or rather she knew it well, and therefore gave them her baleful preference. But mark the retribution which follows the steps of injustice. When any of these men were so fortunate as to escape from seven or ten years servitude, on board a British man of war, they breathed nothing but revenge, and imparted the same feeling to all their countrymen. It was pre-

dicted, that these men who had *wrongs of their own*, would be found, in case of war with England, no common foes. War came, and Britain may read in our naval combats, a commentary on her practice of impressment, and her tyranny on the ocean.

As early as the year 1793, it was declared by the American minister at London, that the practice of impressment had produced great irritation in America, and that it was difficult to avoid making reprisals on the British seamen in the United States. It is perhaps to be regretted, that general Washington's threat was not carried into execution, as it might have brought the affair to issue at once. The practice had grown so vexatious after the treaty of 1794, that the British government was told in plain terms, that unless a remedy was applied, war would be inevitable. It was said to be of such a nature, as no American could bear, "that they might as well rob the American vessels of their goods, as to drag the American seamen from their ships, in the manner practised by them." Certainly the offence would have been as much less, as a bale of goods is of less value than a man. It was stated, that as many as two hundred and seventy Americans were then actually in the British service, the greater part of whom persisted in refusing pay and bounty. They were told, that if they had any regard for the friendship of this country, they would facilitate the means of relieving those of our oppressed fellow-citizens. That the excuse alleged by Great Britain, in not being able to distinguish between her subjects, and the citizens of America, was without foundation, inasmuch as foreigners who could not be mistaken, were equally liable to impressment. The honour of the nation, it was said, was deeply concerned, and unless the practice should be discontinued, it must ultimately lead to open rupture. This was the language uniformly held forth, by every successive administration of the American government. It was the theme of reprobation and remonstrance of every distinguished statesman of this country. On this subject, we find Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Marshall, Jay, Pickering, King, and many others, in their official correspondence, fully

and uniformly concurring. In fact, these complaints continued until the last hour, in consequence of our impolitick submission.


This shocking outrage was at length carried to such extent, that voyages were often broken up, and the safety of vessels endangered, by not leaving a sufficient number of mariners on board to navigate them. It was calculated, that at least *seven thousand Americans* were at one time in the British service, against their will. Even as respects her own subjects, the practice of impressment is one of the most cruel and unjust; in direct contradiction to the general freedom of her constitution, and only covered by the most miserable sophistry; but to America, who would not endure a single one of her citizens to be impressed into her own service, it is not surprising that it should appear detestable. The tribute of Minos, or of Montezuma, of the youth doomed as a sacrifice to infernal idols, was not more hateful. The American was compelled to stoop to the humiliation of carrying about him, on the high seas, the certificate of his nativity; and this was soon found unavailing, it was torn to pieces by the tyrant, and its fragments scattered to the winds. Great Britain boldly asserted the right of dragging from underneath our flag, *every one who could not prove on the spot, that he was not a British subject*. Every foreigner, no matter of what country, was, in consequence, excluded from our merchant service. On the part of the United States, every possible effort was made to compromise the matter, but in vain. No offer was ever made by Great Britain, which presented any prospect of putting an end to these abuses, while the most fair and rational on our part, were rejected. About the year 1800, a proposal was made for the mutual exchange of deserters, but this was rejected by Mr. Adams, for the same reason that the president rejected the treaty of 1806, because it was thought better to have no provision, than one which did not sufficiently provide against the abuses of impressment. England offered to make it penal, for any of her naval officers to impress our seamen, provided we discontinued our practice of *naturalizing her subjects*. The mockery of such a proposition, alone fully proves her

fixed mind. No plan could be devised so suitable to her wishes, as that of subjecting the liberty, life and happiness of an American citizen, to the caprice of every petty lieutenant of her navy; otherwise, she would have been contented with the exclusion of her subjects from all American vessels, a thing which she had no right to ask, but which we were willing to grant for the sake of peace.

The climax of this extraordinary humiliation, and which, a century hence, will scarcely be credited, was still wanting; the attack on the Chesapeake occurred, and for the moment, convulsed the nation. The burst of indignation which followed, was even more violent than that which was produced by the orders in council of 1793. Party animosity was suspended, meetings were assembled in every village, the newspapers were filled with formal addresses, volunteer companies were every where set on foot, and in the first phrensy of the moment, the universal cry was for immediate war. Although hostilities were not declared, the feelings of America were from that day at war with England; a greater attention was paid to the discipline of our militia, and the formation of volunteer corps; and the government was continually making appropriations for our national defence. We still resorted to negotiation, and the aggressors thinking that we might now possibly be in earnest, were willing to avoid war by a sacrifice of pride. They yielded to the humiliation of surrendering the American citizens, upon the very deck from which they had been forced; but at the same time, rewarded the officer, by whom the violence had been offered. In excusing her conduct, England condescended to tell us, with a serious face, *that she never pretended to the right of impressing American citizens*, and this she seemed to consider rather as a magnanimous acknowledgement. Humiliating, indeed, to be seriously told, that she did not regard our citizens as her property! Nothing can furnish stronger proof of the extent of the abuse, and the bad policy of our pacifick course of remonstrance. Our sacred duty to our fellow-citizens, as well as a regard to our national character, forbade such an acquiescence.

From this review of the subject of impressment, we re-

turn to the other principal branch of our national differences. It must be evident to the reader, that nothing was to be expected from any temporary arrangement on the part of our enemy; that nothing short of a change in her general policy and temper would suffice, and nothing but a war could effect this change. Whatever disputes we may have had with other nations, they were of little moment, compared to our differences with England. To settle the terms on which we were to be with her, was of the first importance; our mutual intercourse and trade, was of vast extent; she occupied the highway to other nations, which she could interrupt when she pleased; it was of little consequence on what terms we were with others, as long as our relations with England were not properly adjusted. Our intercourse with France was comparatively of but little moment; she had not recovered from the phrensies of her revolution; her deportment was excentrick, lawless, and unstable; she was a comet, threatening all nations. Our true wisdom was to keep out of her way. On the ocean she was but little to be dreaded, and was in no condition to execute her threats; and notwithstanding the power of England to sweep our commerce from the ocean, and to seal our ports, we still expected something from her good sense, her justice, or her interest. Yet scarcely was the flame of war once more lighted up on the continent, than both the belligerents began, under various pretexts, to prey upon our commerce. On the part of England, the rule of '56 was revived, and applied in a manner more intolerable than ever. The sufferings of the American merchants were such, as to cause them to call loudly on the government for protection, and a war with England, at this time, was by many thought inevitable. It appeared to be her fixed determination, that neutrals should enjoy no trade without her special license and permission. By some it was thought, that if we should enter into her views, and declare war against France, she would amicably arrange the points in dispute between us. This, however, was very doubtful; it might have encouraged her to make still further claims. Such a thing was, besides, impossible. The American people, still smarting under so many



wrongs unredressed, could not be induced to do what would almost amount to a return to subjection.

In May, 1806, Britain commenced her system of paper blockade, by interdicting all intercourse with a great part of France and her dependencies. This operated exclusively on the United States, who were the only remaining neutrals. The decrees of the French emperor of the sixth of November, followed, and were immediately made known to our minister at London, with a threat, that if they were put into execution, (although the British minister well knew, that it could be nothing more than a bravado,) similar measures would be adopted. But without waiting the result, in fact, before the lapse of a fortnight, the British government issued the orders in council, of the seventh January, 1806, which went the full length of declaring, that no vessel should be at liberty to trade from one port of France to another, or from a port under her control, and from which the English were excluded. Napoleon's Milan decrees succeeded, which were little more than nominal to the neutral, who did not place himself in his power: they effected us, not England. We were the only sufferers in this system of retaliation, which was, in fact, a shameful disregard to neutral rights on the part of both. England was apparently benefitted, inasmuch as it struck a blow at our commerce, and rendered it impossible for us to spread a sail without her permission. The belligerents presented the spectacle of two highwaymen, robbing a passenger, and then quarrelling for the spoil; and yet this was called retaliation!

The United States sincerely wished to be at peace. Each of the belligerents accused us of partiality; and wherein was that partiality? Simply in this; France declared, that we suffered the robberies of England with more patience than her own; and England, that she alone had a right to plunder us! Each seemed to consider it as a previous condition of rendering us justice, that we should compel her adversary to respect our rights. In this singular situation, it appeared the wisest course to withdraw entirely from the ocean. Experience soon taught us, that our embargo system could not be carried into effect, for reasons which it is unnecessary for us to

repeat. The restrictive system was substituted; we placed it in the power of either of the wrong doers, to make us the open enemy of the other, unless that other renounced his practices. Napoleon was the first to announce, "a sense of returning justice;" our government, the suffering party, declared itself satisfied. *England had shown no such sense of returning justice;* she had promised to repeal her orders, provided the French decrees were rescinded, but refused to take the official declaration of the French Minister, although we had, in a similar case, before accepted her own; and positively refused to repeal the orders in council, in default of evidence, *that the French were disposed to treat us well.* I do not think it necessary to enter into a discussion of the question of *partiality* to France or England, or Spain or Algiers, although I cannot but regard, as exceedingly strange, that any one of these powers, should insist upon it as a preliminary step to accommodation, that we should punish the aggressions of any other nation. The meaning of both was obvious enough; it was that we should take part in the affairs of Europe. England supposed that we could do her service, and Napoleon thought we could injure England.

In the meantime, the loss of American property by the depredations of the belligerents, had been immense. The vexations practised by the British cruisers off our coast, who made it a point to harass the issuing and returning commerce of the United States, and which the people of England were not able to estimate, kept the public mind continually inflamed. Our citizens were distracted amid these surrounding difficulties. It was agreed that we had ample cause of hostility against both belligerents, but the administration was accused of undue leaning towards France, and a disposition not sufficiently conciliatory towards England. The friends of the administration declared, that the efforts to obtain redress from England, were weakened by a powerful British influence, which had grown up of late years, in the eastern states, and in the commercial cities.

While the public mind was in this state of ferment, from our disputes with England and France, our frontiers

were threatened with an Indian war, which, as usual, was attributed to the instigations of the former. The United States have frequently been charged with cruel violence and injustice to the Indians. That we had encroached upon their hunting grounds, cannot be denied, but this was the necessary consequence of the increase in our population; but the great difference between us and other nations, in relation to the Indian lands, is, that instead of taking them without ever acknowledging the right of the Indians, we have endeavoured to obtain them by fair purchase. The United States were the first to respect the Indian territorial right, as they were the first to abolish the slave trade, and domestick slavery; for, as a nation, we have forbidden it.

There existed a celebrated Indian warrior, who had been always remarkable for his enmity to the whites, and who, like Pontiac, had formed the design of uniting all the different tribes, in order to oppose an effectual barrier to the further extension of the settlements. Tecumseh was a formidable enemy; he resorted to every artifice to stir up the minds of the Indians against us. Of an active and restless character, he visited the most distant nations, and endeavoured to rouse them by his powerful eloquence. He also assailed the superstitious minds of his countrymen, by means of his brother, a kind of conjurer; called "the prophet." He had received assurances from the British, of such assistance as would enable him to carry his plans into execution. In the year 1811, a council was held by governour Harrison, of Indiana, at Vincennes, and at which Tecumseh attended, to remonstrate against a purchase lately made from the Kickapoos and some other tribes. In a strain of wonderful eloquence, the orator inveighed against the encroachments of the Americans, gave a faithful history of the progress of the settlements, from the first commencement on the Delaware, to the moment at which he spoke. When answered by Harrison, he grasped his tomahawk, in a fit of phrensy, and boldly charged the American governour with having uttered what was false; the warriors who attended him, twenty or thirty in number, followed his example; but Harrison had fortunately posted

a guard of soldiers near, who put a stop to their fury. The council, however, broke up, and nothing short of war was expected to result.

Towards the close of the year, the frontier settlers had become seriously alarmed; every thing on the part of the Indians appeared to indicate approaching hostilities. Governour Harrison resolved to move towards the prophet's town, with a body of Kentucky and Indiana militia, and the fourth United States regiment, under colonel Boyd, to demand satisfaction of the Indians, and to put a stop to their hostile designs. In the month of November, having approached within a few miles of the prophet's town, the principal chiefs came out with offers of peace and submission, and requested the governour to encamp for the night, as it was then too late to enter on business. It was not long before this was discovered to be a treacherous artifice. At four o'clock in the morning, the camp was furiously assailed, and after a bloody and doubtful contest, the Indians were finally repulsed, with the loss of one hundred and eighty killed and wounded, on our part, and a still greater number on theirs. Colonel Davies, one of the most distinguished lawyers in the United States; colonel White, of the Saline, and a number of other valuable officers, fell on this occasion. Harrison, after this, destroyed the prophet's town, and having established forts, returned to Vincennes; but peace was by means restored.

The battle of Tippecanoe (the name of the branch of the Wabash on which it was fought) seemed to inflame the temper of the country, already calling for war. A naval incident which occurred some time afterwards, did not serve to allay it. Off the American coast, commodore Rodgers, during the night, fell in with the British man of war brig, which proved to be the *Little Belt*; being hailed by the commodore, the commander merely repeated the question, and, after some minutes, actually fired several of his guns. On this, the commodore poured a broadside into her, and compelled her commander to beg for mercy. This was the first check the British commanders had received from us on the ocean.

The conduct of Great Britain, which grew every day more insupportable, can only be accounted for, by her belief that we could not (to use the contemptuous expression of the day) *be kicked into a war*. The experiment of war, on the part of the United States, was an awful one; any administration might be justly apprehensive of venturing upon an experiment, the consequences of which no one could foresee. This forbearance was construed into pusillanimity; and the name and character of the United States had sunk low, in consequence, with every nation of Europe. We had become the butt and jest of Napoleon and the English ministry, and who yet vainly essayed to draw us into a participation in their wars. A war with Napoleon could not have been more than nominal, unless we united in a close alliance with England; without this, we could inflict on him nothing more than a simple non-intercourse. But a war with England would be a very different matter; without forming any alliance with Napoleon, we might assail her commerce, her public ships, and her adjoining provinces.

But Great Britain was contending for her existence, she was fighting the battles of the civilized world, it was therefore cruel and ungenerous to press our demands at such a moment. This was by no means evident. If it had been true, why did she continue, at such a time, to insult and abuse us in every possible shape? Notwithstanding this appeal, there were many amongst us, who could only see a contest between two great nations for the mastery of the world. We saw the stupendous schemes of British aggrandisement, in every part of the globe, which had little the appearance of fighting for her existence. We saw her already mistress of the seas; we regarded any actual invasion of her shores, as a thing too visionary, even for Napoleon; we saw, in the lawless and unbounded projects of this despot, at which England affected to be alarmed, her best security, as they kept alive the fears and jealousies of the surrounding nations, and continually undermined his throne. We have seen how inconsiderable were, in reality, all his conquests. The existence of England was never in danger; Napoleon could never have subdued Spain and Russia; two

projects, which all now admit to have been the extreme of folly. England was not fighting the battles of the world, but of her ambition; she was not the bulwark of our religion, but the instigator of the savages; she was not the world's last hope—that last hope is America; not as the pretended champion in the cause of other nations, but as a living argument, that tyranny is not necessary to the safety of man; that to be degraded and debased, is not the way to be great, prosperous, and happy.

HISTORY OF THE LATE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

Declaration of War—General Hull reaches Detroit—Crosses into Canada—Skirmishes on the River aux Canards—Battle of Brownstown—Taking of Michillimackinac—Taking of Chicago—Battle of Magagua—The surrender of Hull.

AN interesting period in the history of this youthful nation was fast approaching. Our affairs with Great Britain had become every day more and more embarrassed. The storm already lowered, and there was little hope that the gathering clouds would pass harmless over us. In consequence of this state of things, the session of the twelfth congress had been protracted to an unusual length, and the eyes of America were turned towards it, in anxious expectation. On the fifth of June, the president laid before congress the correspondence between our secretary of state, and the British government, which seemed to preclude all hope of coming to an adjustment, in the two principal points in dispute, the orders in council, and the subject of impressment. But, we had so often been on the point of a rupture with Great Britain, that no certain conjecture could be formed by the most intelligent, of the probable result. The publick voice called loudly for war, at least this was the sense of a great majority of the nation. At length, on the eighteenth of June, after sitting with closed doors, the solemn and important appeal to arms was announced. The president had communicated his message, in which all our complaints against

Great Britain were enumerated with great force, and an opinion expressed that no remedy, no hope now remained, but in open war. The committee of foreign relations, to whom the message was referred, concurred with the president, in recommending the measure. An act of congress was accordingly passed, which received the sanction of the president on the same day; and on the day following, the nineteenth of June, 1812, war was publicly proclaimed.

This highly important and eventful act of the national legislature was variously received. In some places, it produced demonstrations of joy, similar to that which followed our declaration of independence. War, as a calamity, although unavoidable in the present state of the world, where the strong are ever prone to trample on the rights of the weak, should be received without despondency, but not with gladness. There were many, however, who regarded the approaching conflict, as a second struggle in support of national independence, and not in the course of ordinary wars, waged for the sake of mere interest, or in pursuit of the plans of state policy.

On the sea board, and in the eastern states, the sensations which it produced were far from being joyful. The sudden gloom by which their commercial prosperity was overcast, caused an awful sadness, as from an eclipse of the sun. The commerce of the cities, although for some years greatly restricted by the depredations of the two great contending powers of Europe, still lingered in hopes of better times; it must now be totally at an end; their ships must be laid up, and the busy hum of peaceful activity be stilled. In different parts of the United States, the war would necessarily be more severely felt; in an extensive country like this, it is impossible it should be otherwise. Moreover, there were those who regarded this measure as a most interesting and eventful experiment. An opinion was prevalent that the form of our government was not adapted to war, from the want of sufficient energy in the executive branch, and from unavoidable divisions in the national councils. But, what was much more to be feared, the union of our states had scarcely yet been perfectly cemented; and if the interests

of any extensive portion should be too deeply affected, a dissolution of our compact, "the noblest fabrick of human invention," might ensue. A powerful party was opposed to the measure, on the ground, that an accommodation with England might yet be made, that war could not be otherwise than in subserviency to the views of France, and that we were unprepared for so serious a contest. The opposition of a great portion of the population, of the talents, and wealth of the country, would certainly tend to throw embarrassments on its prosecution. Unanimity, in so important a measure, was not to be expected; yet the disadvantages of this opposition would be greatly felt. It was foreseen that our Atlantick cities would be much exposed, that the coasts of the southern states would be laid open to the incursions of marauding parties, and that the western frontier would feel all the horrors of a savage and murderous warfare. Many persons, on the other hand, entertained the belief, that the Canadas would fall, and that the Florid's, in case that Spain should be brought into the contest on the side of England, would be ours. Thus should we be freed from troublesome neighbours, and end for ever, that dreadful species of hostility in which we had been so often engaged with the savages. These hopes were not ill founded; but we were not aware, at the time, of our deficiency in experience, and want of a full knowledge of our resources; the causes of many subsequent calamities.

For some years previous to the declaration of war, a military spirit was gradually diffusing itself amongst the people. Pains were taken in disciplining volunteer companies throughout the country, and a degree of pride and emulation was every where felt, to excel in military exercises. There seemed to be a kind of instinct, to prepare for the approach of war. But the military establishments were exceedingly defective. Acts of congress had already authorised the enlistment of twenty-five thousand men, but it was found impossible to fill the ranks of a regular army, from the small number of individuals who were not in easy circumstances, and therefore under no necessity of enlisting. The whole number already enlisted, scarcely amounted to five thousand

men, and these scattered over an immense surface of country. The president was authorised to receive fifty thousand volunteers, and to call out one hundred thousand militia. This force could not be expected to be otherwise serviceable, than for the purpose of defending the seacoast, or the frontier. A difficulty of still greater importance existed; the best troops in the world, are inefficient, unless they happen to be led by able and experienced officers. Our ablest revolutionary heroes had paid the debt of nature, and those who remained, were either far advanced in life, or had not been proved in other than subordinate situations; and besides, from long repose, they had laid aside all their military habits. There prevailed, however, a disposition to place a degree of reliance on the skill of the revolutionary soldier, from the mere circumstance of having been such, which was not corrected until we had been severely taught by after experience. Such was the situation of things, at the commencement of hostilities.

Whether to be attributed to the nature of our government, whose genius is not well adapted to offensive warfare on land, or to the precipitancy and want of forecast in our rulers, certain it is, that the preparations for the invasion of the province of Canada, were by no means suitable to the occasion.

Governour M'ull, at the head of about two thousand men, was on his march to Detroit, with a view of putting an end to the Indian hostilities, when he received information of the declaration of war. His force consisted of about one thousand regulars, and twelve hundred volunteers from the state of Ohio, who had rendezvoused on the twenty-ninth of April. In the beginning of June they advanced to Urbanna, where they were joined by the 4th regiment of United States infantry, and immediately commenced their march through the wilderness, still in possession of the Indians, and which separates the inhabited part of the state of Ohio, from the Michigan territory. From the town of Urbanna to the Rapids, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, they had to pass through a country without roads, and abounding with marshes. From the Rapids to Detroit, along the

Miamie of the Lake, and along the Detroit river, there were a few settlements chiefly of French Canadians, but in general the territory was but thinly inhabited; the whole of its scattered population scarcely exceeded five or six thousand souls. It was near the last of June when this little army reached the Rapids, after having experienced considerable obstacles, in traversing a gloomy, and almost trackless wilderness. They now entered an open and romantick country, and proceeded on their march, full of an ardent and adventurous spirit, which sought only to encounter difficulties and dangers. The volunteers of Ohio consisted of some of the most enterprising and active young men of the state; finer materials were never collected. After taking some refreshments here, they loaded a schooner with a part of their baggage, in order to lighten their march. On the fifth of July, they encamped at Spring Wells, opposite Sandwich, and within a few miles of Detroit. For some days the army had been under the necessity of proceeding with great caution, to guard against surprises from the Indians, and their allies, and who, but for this timely arrival, would have possessed themselves of Detroit: they, however, had thrown up breast-works on the opposite side of the river, and had made an attempt to fortify a position about three miles below. From both these holds, they were soon compelled to retreat, by a well directed fire from the American artillery.

This was the favourable moment for commencing active operations against the neighbouring province of Upper Canada; and as governour Hull had received discretionary power to act offensively, an immediate invasion was determined on. Preparations for this purpose were directly made, and boats provided to effect the passage of the whole army at the same instant. The British, aware of this design, attempted to throw up a battery, for the purpose of opposing the landing; this was twice rendered abortive; on their attempting it a third time, they were permitted to accomplish it unmolested, as our army could either land above or below it, and thus keep out of the reach of their guns, which consisted of seven small cannon, and two mortars.—On the twelfth, every thing

being made ready, the army embarked, and landed without molestation, some distance above the fort, and entered the village of Sandwich. The inhabitants made no shew of resistance, and were therefore respected in their persons and property; the principal part, however, had been marched to Malden, for the purpose of aiding in its defence. A proclamation was immediately issued by Hull, in which he declared his intention of invading Canada, but gave every assurance of protection to the inhabitants, whom he advised to take no part in the contest. The proclamation, was written in a spirited and energetic style, and had he been eventually successful, there is no doubt it would have been regarded as an eloquent production. It has been censured by the British as intended to seduce her subjects from their allegiance, as if this were not justifiable in an invading army; and as violating the laws of civilized warfare, in the declaration that no quarter would be given to any white man found fighting by the side of an Indian. When we consider, that Indians give no quarter, there may be as much justice in retaliating, upon those who are fighting by their sides, as upon the savages themselves, for it may be presumed that both are actuated by the same intentions. It is not to be supposed that Hull was seriously resolved on carrying this threat into execution; his object was to prevent, if possible, the employment of savages.

In a few days, possession was taken of the whole country along the Trench, or Thames, a beautiful river, whose borders are well settled. This service was performed by col. M'Arthur, of the Ohio militia, who returned to camp, after having collected a considerable quantity of blankets, ammunition, and other military stores. Col. Cass was then despatched in an opposite direction, towards Fort Malden, with two hundred and eighty men, for the purpose of reconnoitering the British and Indians. This place is situated at the junction of Detroit river with lake Erie, thirteen miles south of Hull's camp. Col. Cass, following the course of the stream, reached the river Aux Canards, about four miles from Malden, where he found a British detachment in possession of the bridge. After reconnoitering the situation of the enemy, the colonel

placed a rifle company under capt. Robinson, near the place, with orders, to divert the attention, of the guard, by keeping up a fire until the remainder of the party should appear on the opposite side. This part of the detachment, was to have forded the river about five miles below. The design was frustrated, by their want of a sufficient knowledge of the country; the detachment was unable to reach the designated spot, until late in the evening; in the meanwhile, the attempt to surprise the post had been discovered, and it was strengthened by considerable reinforcements: notwithstanding which a smart skirmish ensued, and the enemy was compelled to abandon his position, after losing eleven killed and wounded, besides several deserters. Col. Cass, having no orders to retain possession of it, although constituting the principal obstruction between the American camp and Malden, thought proper to retire. The floor of this bridge was afterwards taken up, and a breast-work erected on the bank to obstruct the passage of the river.

There occurred, a few days afterwards, another skirmish at the same place, between the guard and one hundred and fifty men under col. M'Arthur. The colonel having advanced somewhat too near the enemy, while reconnoitering their situation, narrowly escaped being cut off from his men. A messenger informed him, that several Indians had been seen passing to his rear, and it was at the same time discovered, that those who had been stationed at the battery, were rapidly quitting it. He had scarcely time to turn his horse, when he, together with his companions, Dr. M'Anaw, and capt. Puthuff, were fired upon by a party of Indians, concealed in the bushes. The detachment, on the report of the guns, advanced to the succour of their leader, and drove the Indians back. The Indian party is said to have been commanded by the daring chief Tecumseh.

These skirmishes, in which the Americans were generally victorious, served to inspire confidence, and, together with the proclamation, had an effect upon the Canadians, many of whom joined our standard, and threw themselves on Hull for protection. They were but the preludes to the attack of Fort Malden, the rallying

point of the British power in this quarter. Until this place should be captured, it was idle to think of making any progress in the conquest of the British possessions. Preparations for this purpose proceeded but slowly. It seems that every thing was to be provided after the invasion. It was not until the beginning of August, that two twenty-four pounders and three howitzers were mounted. In the meanwhile, no steps had been taken to ascertain whether the fort might not be carried by escalade. The capture of this place, which would have been necessary in the prosecution of any further design, had now become absolutely essential to self-preservation. A most unexpected event had happened during the last month—an event to which many of our subsequent misfortunes are to be attributed. This was the surrender of Michilimackinac.

On the sixteenth of July, a party of three hundred white troops, and upwards of six hundred Indians, embarked at St. Josephs, and reached the island next morning. A prisoner was despatched to inform the garrison, and the inhabitants of the village, that if any resistance were made they would all be indiscriminately put to death. Many of the inhabitants escaped to the enemy for protection. The garrison consisted of no more than fifty-six men, under the command of lieutenant Hanks, of the artillery. A flag was now sent by the British, to the fort, demanding a surrender. This was the first intimation of the declaration of war, which the garrison had received. Until this moment, the American commandant had considered the attack as one of the outrages on the part of the Indians, which of late had been frequent; he had therefore resolved to defend himself to the last extremity. He now thought it most prudent to agree to a capitulation, as there was no hope of being able to defend himself successfully, against so great a disparity of force; the attempt might compromit not only the lives of his soldiers, but of the inhabitants of the island, who had sought refuge in the fort. The garrison was accordingly delivered up; security to the property and persons of individuals was stipulated, and the British put in possession of one of the strongest positions in the

United States, on that account, sometimes called the American Gibraltar. The situation completely commands the northwest trade, which is compelled to pass immediately under the guns of the fort, and consequently affords the best means of intercepting the Indian supplies, and of checking the incursions of those restless warriors. It is difficult to say to whose charge this affair is to be laid. Without the intervention of some extraordinary circumstance, with which we are unacquainted, there seems to be nothing to excuse the governor in neglecting to notify the garrison, which was only at the distance of two hundred and forty miles, and twelve days were allowed him for this purpose.

Intelligence of this unfortunate occurrence reached Hull on the 23d of July, while engaged in making preparations for the attack on Malden. The British, by this time, were considerably reinforced, and aided by an additional number of Indians. The golden moment had been suffered to pass. It is generally conceded, that if an assault had been made on the fort, in the first instance, it must have fallen. This was the opinion of the officers; the general, however, declined it under various pretexts. But having neglected this opportunity, there was no longer any hope of carrying the place without being provided with a train of artillery, and the necessary means for a regular assault. The necessity of possessing the post, became every day more apparent. With the fall of Michillimackinac, that of Chicago, and all the other western posts, might be expected to follow, and the Indian tribes would move down with all the force of the North-west Company, rendering the situation of our army extremely critical. In anticipation of these events, the general had sent repeated expresses to procure reinforcements. His expectations of those reinforcements, may probably be one reason of the slowness of his movements against Malden, contenting himself with carrying on a vigilant partizan war, in itself of little consequence. Reinforcements were not hastened, from the belief that the force under his command, was more than sufficient for all the purposes that could be accomplished in this quarter.

The spirit which had animated the troops, in the first instance, was gradually giving way to despondency; while their commander had by this time nearly lost their confidence. By the first of August, every thing being made ready for the attack on Malden, a council of war was convened, and the result was a determination to make it immediately. Desertions from the Canada militia still continued, and the whole force was animated with the prospect of undertaking an enterprise, which it was believed could not but be successful. The cannon was well mounted, and embarked on floating batteries. The general had approved the deliberations of the council, and the day was actually appointed, for carrying them into execution.

Sometime before this, a company of Ohio volunteers, under the command of captain Brush, had arrived at the river Raisin, with supplies for the army. As their march to Detroit, the distance of thirty-six miles, was attended with considerable dangers, from parties of the enemy, it was deemed prudent to remain here until an escort could be sent to guard them. This duty was confided to major Vanhorn, with a detachment of one hundred and fifty men. On his second day's march, near Brownstown, he was suddenly attacked on all sides by British regulars and Indians. His little force made a determined resistance, and being commanded by a brave and skilful officer, was at length brought off, with the loss of nineteen killed and missing, and nine wounded. Captains Gilcrease, McCulloch, and Bostler were killed, and captain Ulry severely wounded.

Scarcely had this detachment left the camp at Sandwich, when a sudden and unlooked for change took place in the determination of the commander in chief. Without any apparent cause, or the occurrence of any new event, he announced his intention of abandoning not only the design upon Malden, but even the position which he then held. This operated like a thunderbolt upon the army; the volunteers murmured; they upbraided their commander with pusillanimity, and even treachery; and it was with difficulty they could be restrained by their own officers, in whom they confided. The disappoint-

ment, and vexation, which ensued, can be better imagined than described; all confidence in their leader was evidently at an end; if treacherous, he might deliver them up to be massacred; and it was evident he was deficient in the skill and ability necessary to command. It was with much reluctance this gallant little army was compelled to abandon, almost in disgrace, the flattering hopes, which they thought themselves on the point of realizing. They reached the opposite shore on the eighth of August, where they received the intelligence of the affair of major Vanhorn, of the day before. Such was the termination of this expedition into Canada, of whose success, an account was every moment expected in the United States; happy had it been if the misfortunes of our arms had terminated here! The enemy's territory was not, however, entirely evacuated; a detachment of about three hundred men, was left to keep possession of Sandwich, principally with a view of affording some protection to the Canadians, who had been induced by Hull's proclamation to join our standard.

One thing was now on all hands considered indispensable, the opening the communication with the river Raisin. In a few weeks, the army might stand in need of the supplies in the possession of captain Brush, and at all events, its situation was rendered extremely unpleasant, by being thus cut off from all communication with the state of Ohio. To affect this object, a respectable force was detached under lieut. col. James Miller, of the United States army, consisting of three hundred regulars of the gallant 4th regiment, which had distinguished itself under col. Boyd, at the battle of Tippecanoe, and also about two hundred militia. The enemy, anticipating a renewal of the attempt, had sent reinforcements of regulars and Indians, so that their force was little short of seven hundred and fifty men: this force might, moreover, be increased during an engagement, from Malden, which is situated opposite Brownstown. They had also thrown up a temporary breast-work, of trees and logs, about four miles from this town, at a place called Magagua, behind which the greater part of the Indians, under Tecumseh,

lay concealed. The whole commanded by major Muir, of the British army.

On the ninth, our detachment marched, but was compelled to use great caution, from the danger of surprise. They, however, drew near the ambuscade, before it was discovered, when suddenly the attack was commenced on captain Snelling, who commanded the advance, with the usual barbarous shouts of the enemy. Undaunted by this sudden onset, he kept his ground until the main body approached, when the Indians sprang up, and with the regulars furiously advanced to the front of the breast-work, where they formed a regular line, and commenced a heavy fire. Col. Miller, with the utmost celerity and coolness, drew up his men, opened a brisk fire, and then charged. The British regulars gave way, but the Indians under Tecumseh, betaking themselves to the woods on each side, kept their ground with desperate obstinacy. The regulars being rallied, returned to the combat, which continued for some time, with equal resolution. Despising both the yells of the savages and the musketry of their allies, the American leader repelled their attacks on every side, his troops gallantly maintaining their ground until the enemy was compelled to yield. They retired slowly to Brownstown, literally retreating at the point of the bayonet; here they hastily embarked in boats, provided for their reception. Had not this precaution been taken, it is probable the whole force would have fallen into the hands of the Americans. Their loss was, of the regulars, fifteen killed, and thirty or forty wounded, but of the Indians nearly one hundred were left on the field. In this battle, which lasted about two hours, we had fifteen killed, and about sixty wounded. The officers who chiefly distinguished themselves, were captain Baker, lieutenants Larabee and Peters, and ensign Whistler. The next day at noon, col. Miller, who kept possession of Brownstown, received orders to return to Detroit. This was rendered necessary from the fatigue which his command had experienced in the engagement of the day before. It was thought more advisable, to send a fresh detachment to accomplish the ultimate object.

An occurrence took place about this time in another quarter, which ought not to be passed in silence. Captain Heald, who commanded at fort Chicago, had received orders from Hull to abandon that post and make his way to Detroit. He accordingly consigned the publick property to the care of some friendly Indians; and with his company, about fifty regulars, accompanied by several families, which had resided near this place, set out on his march. He had proceeded but a short distance along the beach of the lake, when he was attacked by a large body of Indians, who occupied the bank. Captain Heald ascended the bank, and fought them for some time, until they had gained his rear and taken possession of his horses and baggage. He then retired to an open piece of ground, where he was enabled to keep the Indians at bay. But finding that he would be compelled to yield at last, he accepted the offer of protection from an Indian chief. Twenty-six regulars were killed, and all the militia; a number of women and children were inhumanly murdered. Captain Wells and ensign Warner were among the killed. Heald with his lady, who had received six wounds, himself severely wounded, after a variety of escapes, at length reached Michillimackinac.

The victory at Magagua, though brilliant, and highly honourable to the American arms, was productive of no essential advantage. Two days afterwards, a despatch was sent to captain Brush, who was still in waiting for the escort at the river Raisin, informing him that in consequence of the fatigue of the victorious detachment, it had been rendered incapable of proceeding further, and that it was become impossible to send a sufficient force by the usual rout; that he must therefore remain where he was, until circumstances should be more favourable. In a postscript, the general advised him that an attempt would be made to open the communication in another quarter, by crossing the river Huron higher up the country. And accordingly, on the 14th, colonels Miller and Cass were despatched with three hundred and fifty men, for this purpose. Sometime before this, an express had been received from general Hall, commanding at Nia-

gara, bringing information that it was not in his power to send reinforcements.

On the 19th, the British took a position opposite Detroit, and immediately set themselves about erecting batteries. On their approach, major Denny, who commanded at Sandwich, abandoned his position, and crossed over to Detroit, it having been determined to act entirely on the defensive. The British, who continued their preparations for the assault, on the 15th sent a flag to summon the place, accompanied by a note from the British commander, Gen. Brock, which, after stating that the forces at his disposal warranted the demand, concluded in these words; "It is far from my inclination to join in a war of extermination, but you must be aware that the numerous body of Indians who have attached themselves to my troops, will be beyond my control the moment the contest commences. You will find me disposed to enter into such conditions as will satisfy the most scrupulous sense of honour. Lieut. colonel M'Donald and major Glegg are fully authorised to enter into any arrangements that may tend to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood."

To this summons an answer was returned, that the fort would be defended to the last extremity. The British immediately opened their batteries, and continued to throw shells during a great part of the night. The fire was returned, but with little effect on either side. In the morning, it was discovered that the British were landing their troops at Spring Wells, under cover of their ships. To prevent the landing from the fort, at this moment, was impossible; the town lying between it and the river. But if Hull had not neglected the advice of his officers, he might have effectually prevented it, by erecting batteries on the bank, where they would be compelled to debark. A strange fatality seemed to attend this unfortunate man. The enemy having landed, about ten o'clock advanced towards the fort in close column, and twelve deep. From the position of the fort, the enemy were enabled to approach within two hundred yards before its guns could be brought to bear, being thus far sheltered by the town. The American force was, however, judiciously disposed to prevent their advance. The

militia, and a great part of the volunteers, occupied the town, or were posted behind pickets, whence they could annoy the enemy's flanks; the regulars defended the fort, and two twenty-four pounders charged with grape, were advantageously posted on an eminence, and could sweep the whole of the enemy's line. All was now silent expectation: the daring foe still slowly advanced, apparently regardless, or unconscious of their danger; for their destruction must have been certain, had they not been impressed with contempt for a commander, who had so meanly abandoned Sandwich a few days before. The hearts of our countrymen beat high, at the near prospect of regaining their credit. But who can describe the chagrin and mortification which took possession of these troops, when orders were issued for them to retire to the fort; and the artillery at the very moment when it was thought the British were advancing to certain destruction, was ordered not to fire! The American troops, together with a great number of women and children were gathered into the fort, almost too narrow to contain them. Here the troops were ordered to stack their arms, and, to the astonishment of every one, a white flag, in token of submission, was suspended from the walls. A British officer rode up to ascertain the cause, for this surrender was no less unexpected to the assailants. A capitulation was agreed to, without even stipulating the terms. Words are wanting to express the feelings of the Americans on this occasion; they considered themselves basely betrayed, in thus surrendering to an inferior force without firing a gun, when they were firmly convinced that that force was in their power. They had provisions for at least fifteen days, and were provided with all the requisite munitions of war. They were compelled, thus humiliated, to march out, and to surrender themselves prisoners at discretion. The British took immediate possession of the fort, with all the publick property it contained; amongst which there were forty barrels of powder, four hundred rounds of fixed twenty-four pound shot, one hundred thousand ball cartridges, two thousand five hundred stand of arms, twenty-five pieces of iron cannon, and eight of brass, the greater

number of which had been captured by the Americans during the revolutionary war.

The whole territory, and all the forts and garrisons of the United States, within the district of the general, were also formally surrendered; and the detachment under colonels Cass and M'Arthur, as well as the party under captain Brush, were included in the capitulation. Orders had been despatched the evening before, for the detachment under Cass and M'Arthur to return, and they had approached almost sufficiently near to discover the movements of the enemy, while their accidental situation, might enable them to render the most material service during the attack. They were surprised at the silence which prevailed when every moment was expected to announce the conflict, and that surprise was soon changed into rage, when they learned the capitulation. A British officer was then despatched to the river Raisin, to convey the intelligence to captain Brush, who at first gave no credit to so improbable a tale, and actually put the officer in confinement. The melancholy story was, however, soon confirmed by some Americans who had escaped. Captain Brush indignantly refused to submit to the capitulation, declaring that Hull had no right to include him, and determined to return to the state of Ohio. He first deliberated, whether he should destroy the publick stores, which he had in his possession, and which he could not carry away; but reflecting that this might be used as a pretext for harsh treatment to his countrymen, he resolved to abandon them. The greater part of the volunteers and militia, was permitted to return home; but the regulars, together with the general, were taken to Quebec.

In his official despatch, Hull took great pains to free his conduct from censure. In swelling the account of the dangers with which he conceived himself beset, every idle rumour which had operated on his fears, was placed under contribution, while his imagination conjured up a thousand frightful phantoms. He magnified the reinforcements under colonel Proctor, and gave implicit belief to the story that the whole force of the Northwestern fur company, under major Chambers, was approaching; nothing, in fact, was forgotten, which could heighten the

picture, or tend to take the blame from himself. While in the Canada side, it was impossible to effect any thing against Malden, from the difficulty of transporting his artillery. Every thing is difficult to a man who wants the necessary talents. The British garrison had been wonderfully strengthened, and at this critical moment, general Hall, of Niagara, announces that it is not in his power to assist him. What then could be done but to cross over to Detroit; that is, to abandon the inhabitants of Canada, who had placed themselves under his protection; to fly, before the enemy had even attempted to attack or molest him, and thus encourage them in what they would never probably have thought possible to accomplish.

But what appears most to figure in this laboured vindication, is the frightful display of Indian auxiliaries; but few of them, it is true, were to be seen, and therefore the greater room was left to the imagination. According to Hull, the whole "Northern hive," as he called it, was let loose; Winnebagoes, Wyandots, Hurons, Chippeways, Knistenoos, and Algonquins, Pottowatomies, Sacks, Kickapoos, and all the western tribes, were swarming in the neighbouring woods, and concealed behind every bush, ready to rush to the indiscriminate slaughter of the Americans. Lest all this should be regarded as the exaggeration of a disordered intellect, he represented his situation, at the moment of the surrender, as most deplorable. In consequence of the absence of colonels Cass and M^cArthur, he could not bring more than six hundred men into the field, and he was moreover, destitute of all necessary supplies and munitions of war: whereas by the morning's report, his force exceeded a thousand men fit for duty, besides the detachment, which might be expected to arrive about the time of the engagement; and also three hundred Michigan militia, who were out on duty, which would make his force upwards of sixteen hundred men. This force was much superior to that of the British, which consisted of about seven hundred regulars, one half of which was nothing more than militia dressed in uniform, for the purpose of deception, and about six hundred Indians. Every other part of his statement was proved, by

the officers under his command, to have been false or exaggerated. The most ordinary exertion would have sufficed, to have completely destroyed the British force. He declared, that he was actuated by a desire to spare the effusion of human blood! If he had designedly intended the destruction of his fellow-citizens, he could not have fallen upon a more effectual plan; for by thus opening the frontier to the tomahawk of the savage, and giving reasons to our enemy for representing us as contemptible in arms, he invited those very savages, which he so much dreaded, to throw off every restraint, and declare themselves our foes. He might have foreseen, that a considerable force would be sent by the British, for the purpose of retaining this province, and that our country would be compelled to suffer an immense expense of blood and treasure, before our possessions here could be regained. Although this became the field of glory, where many of our countrymen gained imperishable renown, yet the effect of this lamentable occurrence, was visible in every subsequent transaction of the war, on the borders of Canada.

The sensations produced by it, throughout the United States, and particularly in the Western country, can scarcely be described. At first no one could believe an event so extraordinary and unexpected; the public mind was so entirely unprepared for it, that universal astonishment was excited. Whatever doubts might have been entertained, of his being able to subdue the country which he had invaded, there were none of his being able to defend himself. Never was any people more deeply and universally chagrined by this event; in a country, too, where every man has a personal feeling for the honour and welfare of the nation, and where the strongest sympathy would be felt with the friends and families of the brave soldiers, who had been thus wretchedly surrendered by their commander.

The general was afterwards exchanged for thirty British prisoners. Neither the government nor the people were satisfied with his excuses. The affair was solemnly investigated by a court martial. He was charged with treason, cowardice, and unofficer-like conduct. On the first charge, the court declined giving an opinion; on the

two last he was sentenced to death; but was recommended to mercy in consequence of his revolutionary services, and his advanced age. The sentence was remitted by the president; but his name was ordered to be struck from the rolls of the army.

CHAPTER II.

Naval Events—Cruise of Commodore Rogers—The President chases the *Belvidera*—The *Constitution* captures the *Guerriere*—Captain Porter captures the *Alert*—Cruise of the *President*—United States captures the *Macedonian*—The *Wasp* captures the *Frolic*—Privateers—Sensations excited in England.

THE common observation, that evils do not come alone but with others linked in their train, was never more completely refuted, than at the period of the misfortunes of our arms in the west. The nation, overspread with gloom, in consequence of this unexpected disaster, was suddenly consoled in the most pleasing manner. A new and glorious era burst upon our country, and upon the world. The historian will record with wonder, the singular fact, that the same year which saw prostrated the despot of the land, also beheld the pride of the tyrant of the ocean completely humbled. A series of the most brilliant and wonderful exploits, on that element, at once raised our naval renown, to a height which no other had ever attained, and which excited the astonishment and admiration of Europe.

At the moment of the declaration of war, a squadron under commodore Rogers, had rendezvoused under the orders of the government, off Sandy Hook, consisting of the frigates *President*, *Congress*, *United States*, and the brig *Hornet*. On the 21st of June they put to sea, in pursuit of a British squadron, which had sailed as the convoy of the West India fleet, the preceding month. While thus engaged, the British frigate *Belvidera* was discovered, to which they instantly gave chase. The

chase was continued from early in the morning until past four in the afternoon, when the President, outsailing the other vessels, had come within gun shot, she opened a fire with her bow guns, intending to cripple the *Belvidera*, which returned it with her stern chasers. The firing was kept up for ten minutes, when one of the guns of the President burst, killed and wounded sixteen men, and fractured the leg of the commodore. By this accident, and the explosion of the passing box, the decks were so much shattered, as to render the guns on that side useless. The ship was then put about, and a broadside fired, but without the desired effect, though considerable injury was done the *Belvidera*. This vessel having thrown over-board every thing she could spare, now gained ground. The chase was continued until eleven o'clock at night, before it was deemed hopeless. The squadron then continued in pursuit of the convoy, which it did not give over until within sight of the British channel: then stood for the island of Maderia, and thence passing the Azores, stood for Newfoundland, and thence by Cape Sable, arrived at Boston the 30th of August, having made prize of several British vessels; but owing to the haziness of the weather, they were less successful than might have been expected.

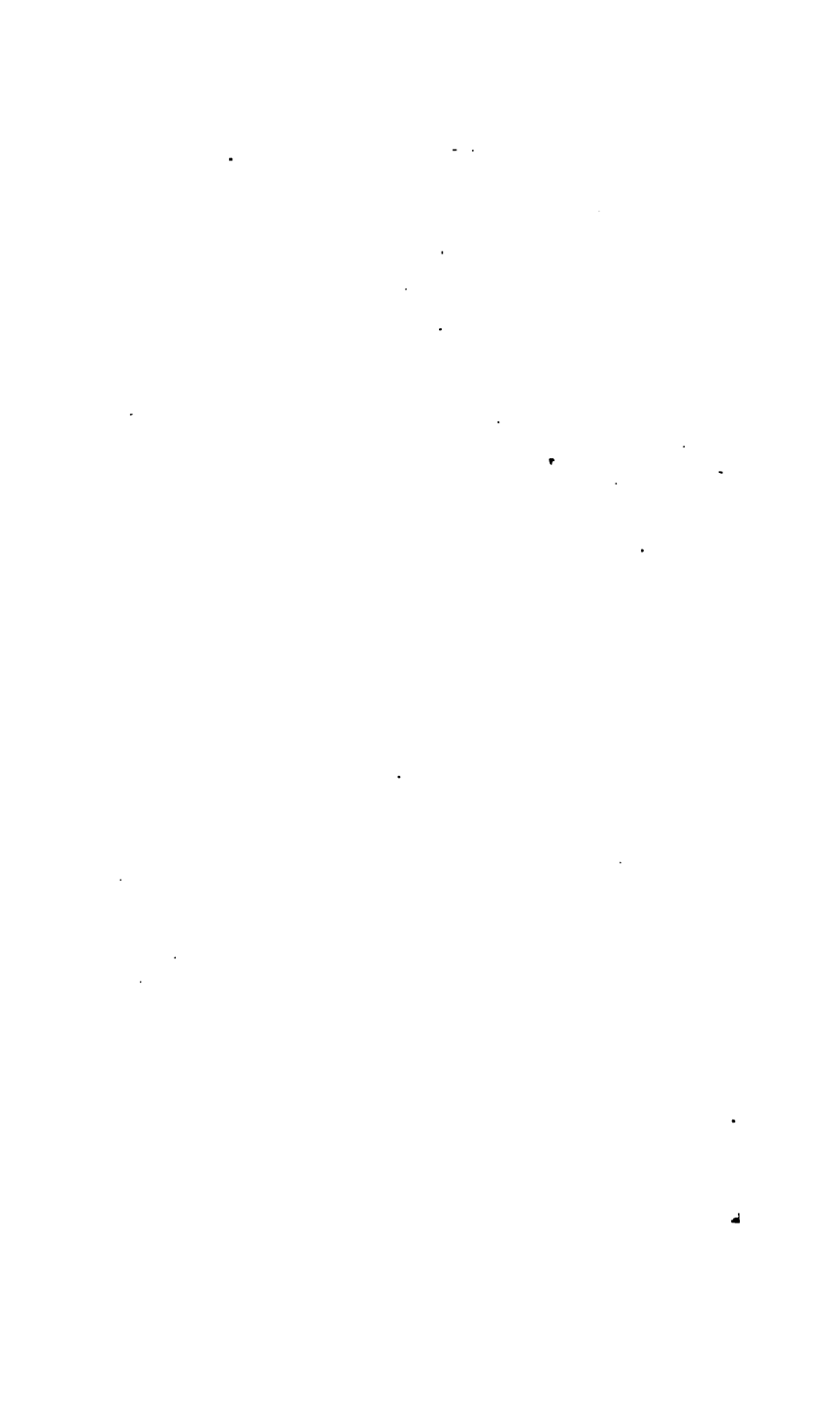
The frigate *Essex* went to sea from New-York, on the third of July; the *Constitution* sailed from the Chesapeake on the twelfth; the brigs *Nautilus*, *Viper* and *Vixen*, were at the same time cruising off the coast; the sloop of war *Wasp* was at sea on her return from France.

The *Constitution*, captain Hull, had sailed from Annapolis on the 5th of July. On the morning of the 17th, off Egg Harbour, she was chased by a ship of the line, the *Africa*, and the frigates *Shannon*, *Guerriere*, *Belvidera*, and *Æolus*. These vessels were approaching rapidly, with a fine breeze, while it was nearly a calm about the *Constitution*. At sunrise the next morning, escape from the enemy was almost hopeless, as they were then within five miles. The *Constitution* was therefore cleared for action, determined to make a desperate resistance. The enemy still drawing near, captain Hull resolved to make another effort to escape. Boats were sent ahead, with

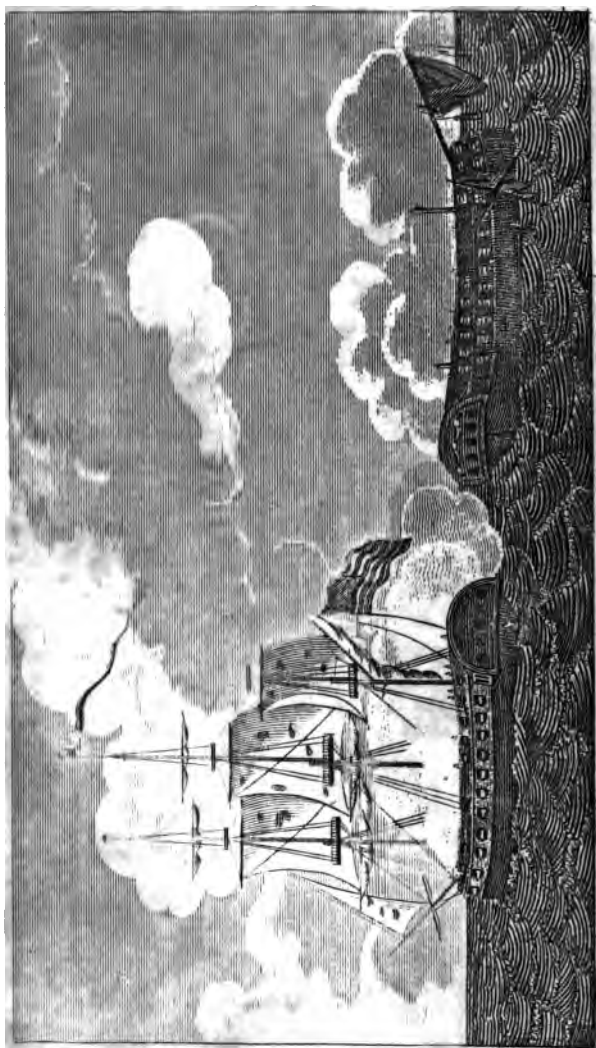
anchors for the purpose of warping, there prevailing almost a calm. The others finding the Constitution gaining upon them, resorted to the same expedient. The chase continued in this manner for two days, partly sailing with light breezes, and partly warping, until the 20th, when the squadron was left entirely out of sight. This escape from so great a disparity of force, was considered as deserving a high rank in naval exploits, and was much admired at the time, as evincing superior nautical skill. The advantage to the British in this chase, was considerable, when we reflect that their foremost vessel had the assistance of all the boats of the squadron, for the purpose of towing. The superiority of captain Hull, was that of seamanship alone. This superiority was sometimes afterwards proved in a most remarkable manner: while naval history lasts it will not be forgotten.

The Constitution again put to sea, on the second of September. On the nineteenth, a vessel hove in sight, and a chase instantly commenced. It was soon discovered to be the *Guerriere*, one of the best frigates in the British navy; and which seemed not aversc from the rencontre, as she backed her main topsail, waiting for the Constitution to come down. This was a most desirable occurrence to our brave tars, as this frigate had for some time been in search of an American frigate, having given a formal challenge to all our vessels of the same class. She had at one of her mast heads a flag, on which her name was inscribed in large characters, by way of gasconade, and on another, the words, "not the Little Belt," in allusion to the broadsides which the President had given that vessel, before the war. The *Guerriere* had looked into several of our ports, and affected to be exceedingly anxious to earn the first laurel from the new enemy. The Constitution being made ready for action, now bore down, her crew giving three cheers. At first it was the intention of captain Hull, to bring her to close action immediately; but on coming within gun-shot, she gave a broadside and filled away, then wore, giving a broadside on the other tack, but without effect. They now continued wearing, and manœuvring, on both sides, for three quarters of an hour, the *Guerriere* attempting

to take a raking position: but failing in this, she bore up, under her topsail and jib. The Constitution perceiving this, made sail to come up with her. Captain Hull, with admirable coolness, received the enemy's fire, without returning it. The enemy, mistaking this conduct on the part of the American commander, for want of skill, continued to pour out his broadsides with a view to cripple his antagonist. From the Constitution, not a gun had been fired. Already had an officer twice come on deck, with information that several of the men had been killed at their guns. The gallant crew, though burning with impatience, silently awaited the orders of their commander. The moment so long looked for, at last arrived. Sailing master Aylwin, having seconded the views of the captain, with admirable skill, in bringing the vessel exactly to the station intended, orders were given at five minutes before five, P.M. to fire broadside after broadside, in quick succession. The crew instantly discovered the whole plan, and entered into it, with all the spirit the circumstance was calculated to inspire. Never was any firing so dreadful. For fifteen minutes the vivid lightning of the Constitution's guns continued one blaze, and their thunder roared with scarce an intermission. The enemy's mizen-mast had gone by the board, and he stood exposed to a raking fire, which swept his decks. The Guerriere had now become unmanageable; her hull, rigging and sails dreadfully torn; when the Constitution attempted to lay her on board. At this moment lieutenant Bush, in attempting to throw his marines on board, was killed by a musket ball, and the enemy shot ahead, but could not be brought before the wind. A raking fire now continued for fifteen minutes longer, when his mainmast and foremast went, taking with them every spar, excepting the bowsprit. On seeing this, the firing ceased, and at twenty-five minutes past five she surrendered. "In thirty minutes," says captain Hull, "after we got fairly along side of the enemy, she surrendered, and had not a spar standing, and her hull, above and below water, so shattered, that a few more broadsides must have carried her down." The Guerriere was so much damaged, as to render it impossible to bring her in; she was therefore set



REFURBISHED & SOLIDITY
CONSTITUTION & DURABILITY



fire to the next day, and blown up. The damage sustained by the Constitution, was comparatively of so little consequence, that she actually made ready for action, when a vessel appeared in sight the next day. The loss on board the Guerriere was fifteen killed and sixty-three wounded; on the side of the Constitution, seven killed and seven wounded. It is pleasing to observe, that even the British commander, on this occasion, bore testimony to the humanity and generosity, with which he was treated by the victors. The American frigate was somewhat superior in force, by a few guns, but this difference bore no comparison to the disparity of the conflict. The Guerriere was thought to be a match for any vessel of her class, and had been ranked amongst the largest in the British navy. The Constitution arrived at Boston on the twenty-eighth of August, having captured several merchant vessels.

This glorious event, as may well be conceived, spread the most unbounded joy over the whole country. The gallant Hull, and his equally gallant officers, were received with enthusiastick demonstrations of gratitude, wherever they appeared. He was presented with the freedom of all the cities, through which he passed, on his way to the seat of government, and with many valuable donations. Congress voted fifty thousand dollars to the crew, as a recompense for the loss of the prize, and the executive promoted several of the officers. Sailing master Aylwin, who had been severely wounded, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and lieutenant Morris, who had been also wounded, was promoted to the rank of post captain. This affair was not less mortifying to Great Britain, who for thirty years, had in no instance lost a frigate in any thing like an equal conflict.

The publick mind was now continually excited by some new series of naval exploits. There was scarcely time for one victory to become familiar, before another was announced. On the 7th of September, commodore Porter of the Essex, entered the Delaware after a most active and successful cruise. He had sailed from New-York on the third of July, and shortly after fell in with a fleet of merchantmen under convoy of a frigate: Having kept

at a distance until night, she cut off a brig, with a hundred and fifty soldiers on board, which was ransomed for 14,000 dollars; the men were disarmed and released, on taking an oath not to serve against us during the war. The commodore regretted, in his letter to the secretary of the navy, that he had not had with him a sloop of war, as in this case he could have engaged the frigate, while the convoy were kept employed, and he could then have captured the whole fleet, consisting of several sail, and having two thousand men on board, including the crew and transports. On the 13th of August, the Essex fell in with the Alert sloop of war, and captured her, after an action of eight minutes; the Alert had mistaken this frigate for the Hornet, of which she was in pursuit, and actually commenced the engagement, by running down and pouring a broadside into the Essex. When she struck her colours but three men were wounded, but she had seven feet of water in her hold. The frigate did not suffer the slightest injury. Com. Porter being embarrassed with his prisoners, who exceeded five hundred in number, concluded to convert the Alert into a cartel, for the purpose of effecting an exchange. Her guns were thrown overboard, and she was ordered to proceed to St. John's, under the command of a lieutenant of the Essex. The British commander at that place protested strongly against the practice of converting captured vessels into cartels, but in this instance was willing, in consequence of the attention which commodore Porter had uniformly shewn to British prisoners, to consent to the proposed exchange. On the afternoon of the 30th of August, a British frigate was seen standing towards the Essex; preparation was immediately made for action, and she stood towards the enemy. Night intervening, the Essex hoisted lights to prevent a separation, which were answered. But at daylight, to the mortification of the crew, who were anxious to support the cause of "Free trade and sailors' rights," the enemy disappeared. On the 4th of September, near St. George's banks, two ships of war were seen to the southward, and a brig to the northward, to which the Essex gave chase, but the winds being light, she made her escape. The Essex

was afterwards chased by the two ships seen to the southward, but escaped in the night by skilful manœuvring.

On the 8th of October, a squadron, consisting of the President, the United States, Congress, and the Argus, sailed from Boston on a cruise. On the 13th, the United States and Argus, parted from the rest in a gale of wind. A few days afterwards, the President and Congress had the good fortune to capture the British packet Swallow, with 200,000 dollars on board, and on the 30th of December arrived at Boston, after a very successful cruise.

The Argus was not less fortunate; after parting from the squadron, she cruised in every direction, between the continent and the West-Indies, and after being out ninety-six days, she returned to New-York, with prizes to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars. She made various hairbreadth escapes; at one time she was chased by a British squadron for three days, and several times almost surrounded; she was one moment within pistol shot of a seventy-four and yet in the midst of all this peril, she actually captured and manned one of her prizes.

The United States, commanded by that distinguished officer commodore Decatur, soon after her separation from the squadron, had the good fortune to add another victory to our Naval Cronicle, not less glorious than that of the Constitution. On the 25th of October, off the Western Islands, she fell in with the Macedonian, captain Carden, a frigate of the largest class, carrying 49 guns and 300 men. The Macedonian, being to windward, she had it in her power to choose her distance, and at no time were they nearer than musket shot; from this circumstance, and the prevalence of a heavy sea, the action lasted nearly two hours. The superiority of the American gunnery, in this action, was very remarkable, both for its greater rapidity and effect. From the continued blaze of her guns, the United States was, at one moment, thought by her antagonist to be on fire; a mistake of very short duration. On board the Macedonian there were 36 killed and 68 wounded. She lost her mainmast, her main-topmast, and main yard, and was much cut up in her hull. The United States suffered so little, that a return to port was not necessary: she had only five killed, and seven

wounded. Among the killed were lieutenant Funk, of whom the commodore spoke in the highest terms. Lieutenant Allen was on this occasion highly applauded. The commodore arrived at New-York on the 4th of December, with his prize. Commodore Decatur, already a universal favourite, experienced the same demonstrations of gratitude, as were shown to captain Hull; nor was there denied him that new species of praise, which the generous conduct of our heroick seamen has uniformly drawn forth, the praise of the enemy; all the private property belonging to the men and officers on board the *Macedonian*, was restored to the captured, with the most rigid exactitude; and their treatment was the most polite and humane.

An act of generosity and benevolence on the part of our brave tars, of the victorious frigate, deserves to be honourably recorded. The carpenter, who was unfortunately killed in the conflict with the *Macedonian*, had left three small children to the care of a worthless mother. When the circumstance became known to the brave seamen, they instantly made a contribution amongst themselves, to the amount of eight hundred dollars, and placed it in safe hands, to be appropriated to the education and maintenance of the unhappy orphans.

The feelings of the nation had scarcely time to subside, when the welcome news of another victory was received; a victory over an enemy most decidedly superior in force, and under circumstances the most favourable to him. This was the capture of the brig *Frolick*, of 22 guns, by the sloop of war *Wasp*. Captain Jones had returned from France, two weeks after the declaration of war, and on the 13th of October again put to sea. On the 16th he experienced a heavy gale, in which the *Wasp* lost her jib-boom and two men. On the evening of the following day, the *Wasp* found herself near five strange sail, and as two of them appeared to be ships of war, it was thought proper to keep at a distance. At day-light on Sunday morning, they were discovered to be six merchant ships, from Honduras to England, under a strong convoy of a brig and two ships, armed with sixteen guns each. The brig, which proved to be the *Frolick*, capt. Whinyates, dropped behind, while the others made sail. The *Wasp*, being pre-

pared for action, at 32 min. past 11 o'clock, came down to windward in handsome style, when the action was begun by the enemy's cannon and musketry. This was returned, and approaching still nearer the enemy, brought her to close action. In five minutes the maintopmast of the Wasp was shot away, and falling down with the maintop-sail yard across the larboard fore and foretopsail, rendered her head yards unmanageable during the rest of the action. In two minutes more her gaff and mizen top-gallant mast were shot away. The sea being exceedingly rough, the muzzles of the Wasp's guns were sometimes under water. The English fired as their vessel rose, so that their shot was either thrown away, or touched the rigging of the Americans; the Wasp, on the contrary, fired as she sunk: and every time struck the hull of her antagonist. The Wasp now shot ahead, raked her, and then resumed her position. The Frolick's fire had evidently slackened, and the Wasp, gradually neared her, until in the last broadside, they touched her side with their rammers. It was now determined to lay her by the board. The jib-boom of the Frolick came in between the main and mizen mast rigging of the Wasp, and after giving a raking fire, which swept the whole deck, they resolved to board. Lieutenant Biddle sprang on the rigging of the enemy's bowsprit, where he was at first somewhat entangled, and midshipman Barker, in his impatience to be on board, caught hold of Biddle's coat, and fell back on the deck, but in a moment sprang up and leaped on the bowsprit, where he found one Lang and another seaman. His surprise can scarcely be imagined, when he found no person on deck, except three officers and the seaman at the wheel. The deck was slippery with blood, and presented a scene of havock and ruin, such as has been seldom witnessed. As he advanced the officers threw down their swords in submission. The colours were still flying, there being no seaman left to pull them down. Lieutenant Biddle leaped into the rigging, and hauled them down with his own hands. Thus, in forty-three minutes, complete possession was taken of the Frolick, after one of the most bloody conflicts any where recorded in naval history. The condition of this unfortunate vessel, was inex-

pressibly shocking. The birth deck was crowded with the dead, the dying and the wounded; and the masts, which soon after fell, covering the dead and every thing on deck, leaving her a most melancholy wreck. Captain Jones sent on board his surgeon, and humanely exerted himself in their relief, to the utmost of his power. The loss on board the Frolick was thirty killed and fifty wounded; on board the Wasp, five killed, and five slightly wounded. This was certainly the most decisive action fought during the war. The Wasp and Frolick were both captured that very day by a British seventy-four, the Poictiers captain Beresford.

Captain Jones spoke of all his officers and men in handsome terms; but the noble part which he bore in this celebrated combat, was touched upon with all that modesty, for which our naval heroes have been so justly admired. Lieutenant Booth, Mr. Rapp, and midshipmen Grant and Baker, were particularly distinguished. Lieutenant Claxton, although too unwell to render any assistance, crawled out of bed, and came on deck, that he might witness the courage of his comrades. A seaman of the name of Jack Lang, from Chester county, Pennsylvania, a brave fellow, who had been twice impressed by the British, behaved, on this occasion, with unusual bravery. Captain Jones reached New York towards the latter end of November. The legislatures of Massachusetts, New-York, and Delaware, of which state he was a native, presented him with their thanks, and several elegant swords and pieces of plate; and the congress of the United States voted him, his officers, and crew, 25,000 dollars, as a recompense for their loss, in not being able to bring in the Frolick. He was soon after promoted to the command of the Macedonian, captured by commodore Decatur.

Feats of naval prowess were not confined to national vessels; the exploits of private armed vessels daily filled the gazettes. Letters of marque were issued soon after the declaration of war, and privateers sailed from every port, to annoy and distress the enemy's commerce. They were generally constructed for swift sailing, an art in which the Americans excel every other people. In their

contests, they exhibited the same superiority over the vessels of the enemy, as was shown with respect to the ships of war. One of the first to sail was the *Atlas*, commanded by captain Moffat. On the third of August, he fell in with two armed ships, and after a severe action, captured them both, but was not able to bring more than one of them into port.

The *Dolphin*, captain Endicot, of Salem, in the course of a few weeks, captured fifteen of the enemy's vessels, and for his activity and courage soon became noted. He had the misfortune to be captured by a squadron, under commodore Broke, and in consequence of the prejudice entertained against privateers, and the irritation which his exploits had excited, he was treated somewhat roughly; this conduct, to the honour of the British officers, was soon changed, when they were informed, by the prisoners, of the humanity of his conduct. On one occasion, there happened to be on board one of the *Dolphin's* prizes, an old woman, who had her whole fortune on board, consisting of 800 dollars; she made a lamentable outcry at her misfortune; but the fact was no sooner known to the sailors, than they spontaneously agreed not to touch her pittance; and on arriving in the United States, she felt so much gratitude, that she could not refrain from giving publicity to it, in the newspapers. It soon became understood, that American privateers were under the same regulations as national vessels, a circumstance in which they differed from those of other nations; that in fact, private cupidity was not the sole motive in arming them, but that they constituted a part of our mode of carrying on the war, by assailing the enemy in his most vulnerable part; and that the gallantry displayed on board these vessels, bestowed almost as much honour on the actor, as those of a publick character; there were, therefore, the same inducements to correctness of deportment. It cannot be denied, however, that on some occasions during the war, the captured privateersmen were treated with a degree of harshness, and even cruelty, which nothing can justify.

Early in the war, one of our oldest and most distinguished naval heroes, but who had, for many years, led

a private life, entered this service. Commodore Barney sailed from Baltimore in the *Rossie*, and, in the course of a few months, did more havock in the British commerce, than was experienced from the French cruisers for years. The fame of this gallant officer was already well known to the enemy, particularly as the captor of one of their vessels of war of superiour force, the *Monk*, during the revolution.

Such was the glorious beginning of our naval warfare against Great Britain. In the course of a few months, two of her finest frigates surrendered, each after a few minutes fighting; and a most decided victory was gained over an adversary confessedly superiour. Before the meeting of congress, in November, nearly two hundred and fifty vessels were captured from the enemy, and more than three thousand prisoners taken. Upwards of fifty of them were armed vessels, and carrying five hundred and seventy-five guns. To counterbalance this immense loss, the enemy had but a small account. By the cruise of commodore Rogers, our merchantmen had been much aided in getting into port, and the number captured was but trifling compared to theirs. The *Frolick* and *Wasp*, we have seen, were captured in a way to give no credit to the captors. Two other smaller vessels were also captured by squadrons; the first, on the twentieth of July, the schooner *Nautilus*, of twelve guns, commanded by lieutenant Crane, captured by the frigate *Shannon*, the leading ship of the squadron. The *Vixen* was captured the twenty-second of November, by the *Northampton* frigate, sir James Yoe. Not long after the capture, both vessels ran ashore, and were wrecked. Through the exertions of captain Reed, of the *Vixen*, much of the property was saved from the wreck; and, in consequence of his services on the occasion, he was publickly thanked by sir James, and permission given to him to return home on his parol. This he generously declined, as he could not think of receiving any benefits, in which his officers and crew could not partake. He accordingly accompanied them to Nova Scotia, where he fell a victim to the climate. He was interred by the British with the honours of war, accompanied with every

demonstration of respect, to the memory of a brave and gallant officer.

The navy now became the favourite of the nation; for thus far, contrasted with our armies, it was entitled to the most decided preference. There were not wanting occasions in which our arms by land had acquired reputation, but they had also brought upon us dishonour; on the contrary, the navy, in every instance, had added to our national renown. The modesty of our naval commanders, in the narratives of the most brilliant achievements, and which were read with delight in every cottage, and spread over our country by the means of our thousand newspapers, was peculiarly pleasing; whereas the proclamations of our generals, were too often filled with idle fustion. The British had threatened to drive our "bits of striped bunting" from the ocean, and we had been seriously apprehensive that our little navy would at once be annihilated! We, however, sought consolation for this, in the prospect of possessing Canada, and freeing ourselves from troublesome neighbours. In both instances how greatly disappointed! The dispensations of Providence are better than the wisdom of men. The mortification of Great Britain was attended with no alleviation. She was wounded in the most vital part. In vain did she seek consolation in endeavouring to hide her misfortune from herself, by representing our vessels, in every instance, as greatly superiour in size, and having every advantage in the various conflicts. This might do with respect to one engagement, but the same cause was insufficient to account for her defeats in every instance. The American frigates were seventy-fours in disguise, and she turned her seventy-fours into frigates, that she might contend on equal terms. But she could not so easily account for the wonderful superiority in the management of the ships, and in gunnery. She set on foot committees of investigation; and the result was, that by some unaccountable neglect, her marine had degenerated, and it was seriously recommended to her navy board, to put their heroes again to school, that they might learn to cope with this new, this subtle, and most extraordinary enemy. From the idle boast of being the

SOVEREIGNS OF THE SEAS, a claim, as vain as that to the dominion of the air or the light, and, without whose permission not a sail could be spread, they were most completely humbled by one of the youngest maritime states; actuated by no ambition of conquest, but merely contending for the privilege of navigating an element, designed by the Almighty for the common possession of the human race.

CHAPTER III.

General Harrison takes command of the Northwestern army—Expedition under general Winchester—General Hopkins—Defence of Fort Harrison—Colonel Campbell's Expedition.

THE publick mind had by this time recovered from the distress and chagrin occasioned by the surrender of Hull. A spirit was roused, which produced effects not equalled by the most enthusiastick periods of our revolution. To the westward and to the southward, volunteer corps were forming in every quarter, and tendering their services for any enterprise which might be undertaken. The western parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia exhibited great alacrity: but it was in the states of Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee, that this generous zeal prevailed in the highest degree. Civil pursuits were almost forsaken, while the prevailing enthusiasm was shared by persons of every sex, and every age. The ladies set themselves to work in preparing military clothing and knapsacks for their relatives and friends, and cheerfully contributed from their household stock, such articles as their soldiers might require. Companies were equipped in a single day, and ready to march the next. There prevailed every where, the most animated scenes of preparation. The admiration which this excites, is not lessened by the reflection, that they were but acting in self-defence, for excepting in the remote settlements, and merely on the frontier, there was

but little to apprehend from the Indians: the settlements having become so considerable in the western states, that it would be impossible for the enemy to penetrate far. They were actuated by an enthusiastick love of country, a generous feeling, which could not brook the thought of having been worsted, or that a part of the territory of the union should fall by conquest into the hands of our enemy. The military ardour which was now awakened, displayed the character of a free people, in the most interesting point of view.

Louisville and Newport had been appointed as the places of rendezvous, for the troops destined to the aid of Hull. So numerous were the volunteers from Kentucky, who offered their services here, that it was soon found necessary to issue orders that no more would be received, and many companies, thus disappointed, were compelled to turn back. The command of the Kentucky militia, was assigned to general Payne. The same alacrity was manifested in the state of Ohio, which, in the course of a few days, embodied an equal force under general Tupper. The Pennsylvania volunteers, under general Crooks, were marched to Erie, and a brigade of Virginians under general Leftwich, was to join the troops of Ohio, at Urbanna. The Kentucky troops, together with the seventeenth United States regiment, under colonel Wells, the greater part of which had been enlisted in the western country since the war, were destined for fort Wayne, and thence for the Rapids, which was appointed as the general rendezvous. Thus in a few weeks, upwards of four thousand men were drawn out from their homes, completely equipped, embodied, and ready for the field. The command of this army was given to major general Harrison, who was well known to the western people, and whose recent conduct at Tippecanoe had rendered him popular as a leader. In order to secure him this rank, he was brevetted by the governour of Kentucky, and sometime after appointed commander-in-chief of the northwestern army by the president.

The first step taken by Harrison, was to relieve the frontier posts, principally fort Harrison, situated on the Wabash, and fort Wayne, situated on the Miami of the

Lakes, and on the road to the Rapids. It might be expected that this fort, as well as fort Defiance, situated lower down, would be attempted by the British, in order to obstruct the road to Detroit. Harrison arrived at this place on the twelfth of September, with about twenty-five hundred men. The Indians who had laid siege to it, disappeared on his approach. It had been invested by a considerable body of them, who after repeated attacks, from the sixth to the ninth, in which they resorted to every stratagem, and several times attempted to take it by assault, were compelled to retire, after destroying every thing outside the fort. The garrison consisted of no more than seventy men.

After remaining here a few days, general Harrison, not thinking it advisable to proceed to the Rapids, until sufficiently strengthened by the arrival of the other troops, resolved to occupy the intermediate time in laying waste the Indian country. Colonel Wells was despatched on the fourteenth, with his regiment, and that under the command of colonel Scott, together with two hundred mounted riflemen, against the Puttawatomy town on the river St. Joseph, which discharges itself into lake Michigan. The other, under the command of general Payne, consisting of colonels Lewis and Allen's regiment, and captain Garrard's company, against the Miami villages. The detachments were in both instances successful, the bark and wooden huts of nine villages were destroyed, the inhabitants having abandoned them; their corn was also cut up, according to the mode of warfare practised on these people by all European nations. General Harrison returned to fort Wayne about the eighteenth, where he found general Winchester, with considerable reinforcements from Ohio and Kentucky; this officer had been originally destined to the command, and the new arrangement had not yet been known. General Harrison, therefore, set off for Indiana, but was soon overtaken by a messenger, with information of his promotion. On the twenty-third, he accordingly resumed the command.

The day before his arrival, general Winchester had marched for fort Defiance, on his way to the Rapids, the place of ultimate destination. His force consisted of a

brigade of Kentucky militia, four hundred regulars, and a troop of horse, in all about two thousand men. The country which he was compelled to traverse, opposed great difficulties, particularly in the transportation of stores. Along the heads of the rivers which discharge themselves into the Ohio, on the south, and those which discharge themselves into the lakes on the north, there is an extensive tract of flat land, full of marshes and ponds, in which the streams take their rise. In rainy seasons particularly, this tract is exceedingly difficult to pass, the horses at every step sinking to the knees in mud. The ground, besides, is covered with deep forests and close thickets. To facilitate the passage through this wilderness, each man was obliged to carry provisions for six days. General Harrison proceeded to fort St. Mary's, for the purpose of transporting supplies by the Aux Glaise, a branch of the Miami. The detachment, for this purpose, was placed under the command of major Jennings.

The American troops moved slowly, on account of the precautions necessary to avoid surprise, in a country highly favourable for Indian warfare. From the closeness of the thickets, they were under the necessity of cutting open a road each day, and were not able to make more than six or eight miles. They usually encamped at three o'clock, and threw up a breast-work to guard against a night attack. They had the precaution on their march, to be preceded by a party of spies, under an active officer, captain Ballard, and an advanced guard of about three hundred men. On the twenty-fourth, they discovered an Indian trail for the first time, and pursued it some distance; but from the nature of the country, it was impossible to overtake the enemy. Ensign Legget, having obtained permission to penetrate to fort Defiance, still at the distance of twenty-four miles, set out accompanied by four volunteers. These gallant young men, not being sufficiently experienced in such enterprises, were killed the same evening, and found the next day by the spies, scalped and tomahawked in the most barbarous manner. On the twenty-seventh, captain Ballard, who had gone before for the purpose of burying the dead, discovered an Indian trail; but being aware of the

stratagems of these wily people, instead of following it, he divided his company, and marched his men on each side. The stratagem of the enemy being thus frustrated, they rose from their hiding places, raised the war whoop, and took possession of an elevated piece of ground; but were soon compelled, by the approach of the cavalry, and the well directed fire of the spies, to betake themselves to the swamps and thickets. The next day, while the army was on its march, four Indians fired upon the spies; the general instantly drew up his men, and sent forward a detachment of horse, which returning with an account that no enemy could be seen, the line of march was again resumed. They had not proceeded far, when a trail was discovered, which induced the general to cross the river, and shortly after another trail was discovered, but which was at first supposed to have marked the march of colonel Jennings, and was therefore hailed with joy by the troops, who had began to suffer exceedingly for want of provisions. The agreeable mistake was unpleasantly rectified by the arrival of the scouts, who brought intelligence that about two miles above fort Defiance, they had seen the Indians encamped, with their war poles erected, and bloody flag displayed.

On the evening of the twenty-ninth, a messenger arrived from colonel Jennings, with the information; that, on having discovered the British and Indians in possession of fort Defiance, he had thought it prudent to land about forty miles above that place, where he had erected a block-house and awaited further orders. Captain Garard, with about thirty of his troopers, was despatched with orders to Jennings, to forward the provisions; this was promptly obeyed. Captain Garard returned as the escort to the brigade of pack-horses, on which they were loaded, after having been for thirty-six hours exposed to an incessant rain. This occurrence gave new life and spirits to the starving army, which had in the mean time taken possession of fort Defiance. The British and Indians had precipitatedly descended the river.—On the fourth of October, general Harrison left the fort and returned to the settlements, with a view of organizing, and bringing up the centre and right wing of the army; the

left wing having been placed under the command of general Winchester. Orders were given to general Tupper, by the commander-in-chief, to proceed immediately to the Rapids, with about one thousand men, for the purpose of driving the enemy from that place.

The intended expedition of general Tupper proved abortive. The general, in consequence of the damaged state of the ammunition, and the length of time requisite to prepare the necessary provisions, was considerably delayed. In the mean while the Indians had killed a man on the opposite side of the river, and almost within gun shot of the camp. He beat to arms, and ordered major Brush to cross over with about fifty men, and explore the woods, while a strong detachment would be formed for the purpose of supporting him, in case of attack. The party had no sooner moved, than all in camp began to break away, twenty or thirty together, in order to join in the chase, and by no exertion of authority could they be kept back; so totally insensible were they to any thing like regular military subordination. Luckily these small bodies were not attacked, or they must have been cut to pieces. Immediately after this, orders were given by the commanding general, to go in pursuit of the Indians, and if possible ascertain their number; general Tupper represented his situation, and requested that the order might be countermanded; but this was answered by a peremptory command, which he now attempted to obey. This unfortunately resulted in a misunderstanding between him and the commanding general, in consequence of which colonel Allen received private orders to supercede him in the command; on this being made known to the corps of Ohio, they positively refused to march, unanimously set off for Urbanna, and the expedition was entirely broken up.

These are instances of insubordination much to be regretted; but they spring from the want of the habit of mechanical obedience, and not permitting their commanders, on occasions like this, to think for them. Such are the unavoidable evils attending the militia hastily called together, and not kept in a body a sufficient length of time to learn the utility of perfect subordination. They do

not reflect, that, to a soldier, this is no more incompatible with the liberty of the citizen, than the wholesome restraints of virtue and the laws, are to the man of society.

It was now necessary to wait until the arrival of the other divisions of the army, before any thing further could be attempted against the Rapids, and much less against Detroit. The army was at this time accompanied by some friendly Indians, whom general Harrison had received into his service at fort Wayne, the greater part under the command of Logan. No other course would have prevented their becoming our enemies; it was in vain to expect them to remain neutral, while surrounded by war. However contrary to our maxims and policy to employ such auxiliaries, we were compelled to do so in self defence; and we afterwards sufficiently evinced, by the conduct of those Indians, that it is not impossible to restrain them from the commission of acts of barbarity.

General Tupper, having returned to Urbanna, with his mounted men, was despatched with the division of the centre, which consisted of a brigade of Ohio volunteers and militia, and a regiment of regulars, to fort M'Arthur, while the right wing, consisting of a Pennsylvania and a Virginia brigade, was ordered to Sandusky.

On his arrival at fort M'Arthur, general Tupper organized another expedition; composed of about six hundred men, with a view of proceeding to the Rapids. Having provided himself with a supply of provisions for five days, he marched on the tenth, and on the thirteenth approached within thirteen miles of the place, which he found, by his scouts, to be still in possession of the British and Indians. A number of boats and small vessels were seen lying below. On receiving this information, he advanced within a few miles of the Rapids; and then halted until sunset, with a view of crossing the river, and making an attack the next morning by day break. The rapidity of the current was such, that his attempts were ineffectual; many of the men, who endeavoured to cross, were swept down the stream, and it was thought advisable to order those, who had actually passed to return. It was now resolved to resort to stratagem, and if possible, to decoy the enemy over. For this purpose, early in the morning, he shewed

the heads of his columns, by advancing some distance out of the woods, in an open space opposite the enemy's camp. A great confusion appeared to ensue; those in the vessel slipped their cables, and descended the river, while the Indian women were seen scampering off on the road to Detroit. A fire was then opened upon the Americans, with musketry and a four pounder. Tupper's stratagem did not perfectly succeed; but a few Indians at first seemed disposed to cross, and then acted with great caution. A number, however, were observed in a little while, crossing higher up the river; being now apprehensive that his camp might be attacked, the general thought proper to return. He had not proceeded far, when some of the men, unfortunately, contrary to orders, fired on a drove of hogs, and pursued them some distance, and others, equally disobedient, entered a field to pull corn. At this moment, a body of mounted Indians rushed forward, killed four men, and attacked the rear of the right flank. The column being thrown back, commenced a brisk fire, and caused the Indians to give ground. The Indians rallied, and passing along the van-guard, made a charge upon the rear of the left column: this column was also thrown briskly back; all attempts to break it were unsuccessful, and in twenty minutes, the Indians again retired. Conceiving this only preliminary to an attack of foot, general Tupper ordered the right column to move up in marching order, to prevent the attack from being made on the right flank. Information was now received, that the Indians were crossing in considerable numbers; on this, the general ordered the left column to take up the marching order, and proceed to the head of the right column, where a number of Indians had already crossed on horseback, others still in the river, and about two hundred on the opposite bank. These, a battalion was ordered to dislodge, which completely succeeded in the undertaking, many of them being shot from their horses in the river. The different charges of the Indians were led by the famous chief Split-Log, who rode a fine white horse, from which he sometimes fired; at other times alighted, and fired from behind a tree. The horses appeared to have been much superior to those which the Indians generally ride, and they were

well supplied with holsters and pistols. The Americans were compelled to return in haste, as their provisions were by this time entirely exhausted, and they had to march forty miles before they could obtain a fresh supply.

While these things were taking place in the northwestern army under general Harrison, other events deserving attention, transpired further to the westward, under different leaders. We have seen that many of the companies equipped for the service of the United States, were dismissed, as exceeding the number required, or the number for which supplies had been provided. The spirit for volunteering was excited to so high a degree, that the people could not be satisfied, without having an opportunity of doing something. Vincennes, on the Wabash, was appointed the place of rendezvous for an expedition against the Peoria towns, and others situated on the Illinois and Wabash rivers. Nearly four thousand men, chiefly mounted riflemen; under the command of general Hopkins, collected at this place, and early in October proceeded to fort Harrison. This expedition was sanctioned by the venerable governor Shelby, of Kentucky, and was, perhaps, the most formidable in appearance that had ever entered the Indian country.

The army reached fort Harrison about the tenth, and on the fourteenth crossed the Wabash, and proceeded on its march against the Kickapoo and Peoria towns; the first about eighty miles distant, the others about one hundred and twenty. Its march lay through open plains covered with a luxuriant grass, which in autumn becomes very dry and combustible. Murmurs and discontents soon began to shew themselves in this unwieldy and ill compacted body, which was kept together by no discipline or authority. Every one consulted his own will; in fact, but little could be expected from this "press of chivalry." They had scarcely been four days on their march, when they demanded to be led back; a major, whose name it is unnecessary to remember, rode up to the general, and peremptorily ordered him to return! An idea had begun to prevail, that the guides were ignorant of the country, and that the course was the opposite of that which they directed. *An unlucky occurrence, towards evening, gave the*

finishing blow to this mighty expedition. A gust of wind had arisen, while they were encamped, which blew violently towards them; soon after, the grass was discovered to be on fire, and the flames approaching with great velocity. This was supposed to be an Indian attack; it would have been a formidable one, had they not set fire to the grass around their camp, and thus arrested the progress of the flames. The next morning a council of officers was called, and the general, seeing the state of the army, or more properly of the crowd, proposed to proceed against the Indian towns with five hundred men, if that number would volunteer their services; while the remainder might return to fort Harrison. When the proposal was made to the men, not one would turn out; the general having entirely lost his popularity. He then requested to be permitted to direct the operations of that single day; this being agreed to, he placed himself at their head, and gave orders to march; but instead of following him, they turned round, and pursued a contrary direction. Finding it useless to attempt any thing further with such a body, he followed in its rear to fort Harrison. They saw no Indians during their march; their number must have caused a most formidable appearance in the prairie, particularly as they were nearly all on horseback. The expedition was by no means useless, as it impressed the enemy with an alarming idea of the numbers which we could bring against them. No inference unfavourable to militia, can be justly drawn from this body, or to the individuals who composed it: for it was nothing more than a crowd of armed men under no command.

The same officer, sometime in November, led another party, with more success, against the towns at the head of the Wabash. On the eleventh, he again set out from fort Harrison, with about twelve hundred men; while at the same time, seven boats, under the command of lieutenant colonel Barber, ascended the river with supplies and provisions. On the nineteenth, he reached the prophet's town, and immediately despatched three hundred men, to surprise the Winebago towns on Ponce Passu creek. The party, under colonel Butler, came upon the place about day break, but found it evacuated. This village,

together with the prophet's town, and a large Kickapoo village, containing one hundred and twenty cabins and huts, were destroyed, together with the winter's provision of corn. Until the twenty-first, no Indians were discovered, when they fired on a small party, and killed a man of the name of Dunn, a gallant soldier of Duvall's company. The next day, about sixty horsemen, under colonels Miller and Wilcox, being sent out to bury the dead, they were suddenly attacked by a considerable party of Indians; and in the skirmish which ensued, eighteen of our men were killed, wounded and missing. The principal camp of the Indians having been discovered, preparations were made to attack it, but on approaching it, the enemy was found to have gone off. Their situation was remarkably strong, being on a high bank of the Ponce Passu, and no means of ascending but through some narrow ravines. The inclement season advancing rapidly, it was deemed prudent to think of returning, particularly as the ice in the river began to obstruct the passage. The success and good conduct of this detachment forms a remarkable contrast with the first, and proves that militia, after having been sometime embodied, becomes as good troops as any other. This corps suffered exceedingly; and without a murmur; many of them were sick, and to use the words of the general, many were "shoeless and shirtless," during the cold weather of this season. These repeated incursions would doubtless strike terror into the enemy, and operate powerfully upon the only sense to which we could appeal.

We have passed over, without noticing, but with the intention of recording in a more distinguished manner, the admirable defence of fort Harrison, which was timely relieved by general Hopkins, on his first expedition. This fort was invested about the same time with fort Wayne, by a large body of Indians, some of whom had affected to be friendly, and had the day before, intimated to captain Taylor, that an attack might soon be expected from the prophet's party. On the evening of the third of September, two young men were killed near the fort, and the next day, a party of thirty or forty Indians, from the prophet's town, appeared with a white flag, under pretence of

obtaining provisions. Captain Taylor, suspecting an attack that night, examined the arms of his men, and furnished them with cartridges. The garrison was composed of no more than eighteen effective men, the commander and the greater part of his company having suffered very much from sickness. For sometime past, the fort had actually been considered incapable of resisting an attack. About eleven o'clock, the night being very dark, the Indians had set fire to one of the block houses unperceived. Every effort was made to extinguish the flames, but without effect; a quantity of whiskey, amongst other stores, belonging to the contractor, deposited there, blazed up, and immediately enveloped the whole in a flame. The situation of the fort became desperate; the yells of the Indians, the shrieks of a number of women and children within, added to the horrors of the night, altogether produced a terrific scene. Two soldiers, giving themselves up for lost, leaped over the pickets, and one of them was instantly cut to pieces. The commander, with great presence of mind, ordered the roofs to be taken off the adjoining barracks; this attempt, with the assistance of Dr. Clark, fortunately proved successful, although made under a shower of bullets. A breast-work was then formed, before morning, six or eight feet high, so as to cover the space which would be left by the burnt block house. The firing continued until day-light, when the Indians retired, after suffering a severe loss; that of the fort was only three killed, and a few wounded. The Indians, discouraged by the failure of this attack, thought proper to retire, and made no further attempts, until the place was happily relieved by the arrival of general Hopkins. In consequence of his conduct, captain Taylor was afterward promoted to a majority.

Another expedition was undertaken by colonel Russell, with three companies of United States rangers, and a party of mounted riflemen, under governor Edwards, of Illinois. This party, consisting of three hundred and sixty men, was destined to meet general Hopkins at the Peoria towns, on the Illinois river. They were disappointed in this, in consequence of what has been already detailed; but they, notwithstanding, persevered in their

enterprize, and destroyed one of the towns known by the name of Pamitaris's town, and pursued the Indians into a swamp in its vicinity, where they had fled for shelter. The party waded into the swamp for several miles, in some places to the waist in water, and killed upwards of twenty of the enemy in this place, and on the bank of the river. The village, which was populous and flourishing, was completely destroyed, together with their winter's provisions. The party returned to camp on the thirty-first of October, after an absence of only thirteen days.

Lieutenant colonel Campbell, of the 19th United States infantry, was, about the same time, detached against the towns on the Mississinewa river, a branch of the Wabash. A town, inhabited by Delawares and Miamis, was surprised on the seventeenth of November; upwards of thirty persons were taken prisoners, and eight warriors killed. The next morning at day-light a furious attack was made on the American camp; major Ball, with his dragoons, sustained the onset for some time; but a well directed fire from captain Butler's "Pittsburgh Volunteers," compelled the enemy to give way. Captain Trotter, of the Lexington troop of horse, charged, and the Indians precipitately fled. Captain Pearce, of the Zanesville troop, was, unfortunately, killed in the pursuit. Lieutenant Waltz, of the Pennsylvania volunteers, was also killed. The officers particularly named on the occasion, were lieutenant colonel Simmeral, major M'Dowell, captains Markle, M'Clelland, Gerrard, and Hopkins. The loss in killed on the part of the assailants, amounted to forty, and on our part, to eight killed, and about thirty wounded. Several of their villages were afterwards destroyed.

Besides these affairs, there were a number of less moment, in which the militia of Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri territories, greatly distinguished themselves. The Indians were so much harrassed, that they began seriously to repent of having taken up the war-club so hastily; and their sufferings, during the succeeding winter, were not likely to produce any change of feeling towards those who had thus urged them to encounter their own ruin. The security of the frontier from the murderous scalping knife of the savage, was thus in a great measure

effected. The Indians would be compelled to remove to the distant British establishments for sustenance, during the winter, since their means of subsistence were cut off. As to the loss of their huts or wigwams, that was a matter of little consequence to them; a few days being sufficient to re-construct them. But by their being thus driven to a distance, with their wives and children, they were prevented from annoying the settlers, with their fiend-like warfare. Many a peaceful settler was saved from their midnight attacks; and "the slumbers of the cradle" were protected from the savage war-whoop.

CHAPTER IV.

Troops on the Canada frontier—Capture of the Caledonia—Battle of Queenstown, and the death of general Brock—Bombardment of Niagara—Abortive attempt of general Smyth.—Northern Army—First cruise of commodore Chauncey.

IT is now time to turn our attention to the northern frontier, that we may take a view of the occurrences on that extensive line, from Niagara down the St. Lawrence. Towards the close of the year, our forces had chiefly concentrated in two bodies; one near Lewistown, consisting of some regulars newly enlisted, and militia, amounting to four thousand men, under general Van Rensselaar, of New-York; the other, in the neighbourhood of Plattsburg and Greenbush, under the commander-in-chief, general Dearborn. At Black Rock, at Ogdensburg, and Sackett's Harbour, some regulars and militia were also stationed. During the summer and autumn, a number of volunteer companies had marched to the borders, as also the new recruits, as fast as they could be enlisted. Bodies of regulars were distributed in each of these places, with officers of experience, for the purpose of drilling the raw troops as they arrived. It was expected, that before the month of October, every thing would be made ready for a formidable invasion of Canada. Considerable dis-

appointment was, however, experienced, in consequence of the refusal of the governours of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, to permit the militia of those states to march under the requisition of the president, on the ground of their being the proper judges, under the constitution, of the exigency which might require them; and as they were not friendly to the war, and particularly so to rendering it offensive, they felt no disposition to wave their privileges. Other constitutional objections were also urged, which it is scarcely necessary to mention. As the militia in those states was better disciplined and more effective, than any in the union, their absence was severely felt. It is highly probable, that had there been a full co-operation on the part of these states, with the views of the general government, that Upper Canada, at least, would have fallen into our hands, in the course of the first campaign. Military stores had been collected at different points, and general Dearborn, who had been appointed in consequence of his experience in the revolutionary war, was actively engaged, with the assistance of such officers as Pike, Boyd, and Scott, in drilling, disciplining, and organizing his army. General Smyth, who was considered an able tactitian, was similarly engaged. Between eight and ten thousand men were collected along this extensive line, and it was hoped that something might still be done. Skilful officers of the navy were also despatched, for the purpose of arming vessels on lakes Erie, Ontario, and Champlain, in order if possible to gain the ascendancy there, and to aid the operations of our forces. The army under the command of Van Rensselaar, was called the army of the centre, to distinguish it from that of Harrison. That under the immediate command of general Dearborn, the army of the north.

About the beginning of October, an action was achieved by lieutenant Elliot, who had arrived on lake Erie, for the purpose of superintending the naval equipments, which roused the attention of the army of the centre, and excited a general emulation to do something worthy of notice. On the morning of the eighth, the British brig *Detroit*, formerly the *Adams*, surrendered by Hull, and the brig *Caledonia*, came down from Malden, and an-

chored under the guns of fort Erie, nearly opposite Black Rock; Elliot conceived the idea of attacking them, and sent an express to hasten the seamen, then on the way, and who, about fifty in number, arrived in the evening, wearied with a march of five hundred miles. Allowing them until twelve at night for repose, he then embarked in boats with about fifty volunteers, who joined him, and, crossing the river, slipped down to the brigs; in an instant he was on board, and drove the British below. In ten minutes afterwards, he was under weigh. But the wind not being sufficiently strong to bear them against the current, they were both run aground; the Caledonia, so as to be protected by the batteries of Black Rock; but the Detroit, after being bravely defended, until a considerable part of the military stores on board were secured, was set on fire and destroyed. The Caledonia was laden with furs to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This was effected with the loss of only two killed and four wounded.

The affair having kindled the ardour of the Americans of the army of the centre, they demanded to be led to the invasion of Canada, and some of the volunteers threatened to return home, unless their wishes were complied with. But this was not the ardour of veterans, well acquainted with the dangers to be encountered, and despising them; it was the inconsiderate rashness of inexperienced men, ready to anticipate the proper moment, but not possessing the firmness to persevere when surrounded by unaccustomed terrors. After a conference with generals Smyth and Hall, general Van Rensselaer resolved to make an attack on the heights of Queenstown. From the information he could collect, the enemy's force had been chiefly drawn off for the defence of Malden, as it was supposed, under the command of general Brock, who had left the territory of Michigan under the government of general Proctor, until he could organize a force to return. Could this place be possessed by our troops, they would be sheltered from the approaching inclemency of the season, and the operations of the western army much facilitated. Accordingly, at four in the morning of the eleventh, in the midst of a dreadful northeast storm,

and heavy rain, an attempt was made to pass the river; but owing to the darkness of the night, and various unforeseen accidents, the passage could not be effected.

This failure but served to increase the impatience of the troops, who became almost ungovernable. Orders were despatched to general Smyth, to advance with his corps, as another attempt would be made on Queenstown. Every arrangement was rapidly made, and early on the morning of the thirteenth, the troops embarked, under the cover of the American batteries. The force designated to storm the heights, was divided into two columns; one of three hundred militia, under colonel Van Rensselaer, the other of three hundred regulars, under colonel Christie. These were to be followed by colonel Fenwick's artillery, and then the other troops in order. The British, in the meanwhile, anticipating this attack, had obtained considerable reinforcements from fort George, and, if necessary, could be still further assisted by general Brock, who, it now appeared, commanded at that place. At day-light, as soon as the approach of the Americans could be discovered, a shower of musketry and grape opened from the whole line on the Canada shore, and was returned by our batteries, with the addition of two sixes, which, after an extraordinary effort, lieutenant colonel Scott had brought to their assistance from the Falls of Niagara. The fire of the enemy, and the eddies in the river, produced considerable embarrassment, in consequence of which, lieutenant colonel Christie, who was wounded by a grape shot in the hand, and colonel Mulaney, fell below the intended point, and were obliged to return. Colonel Van Rensselaer, who commanded the whole, and who led the van, reached the shore, with only one hundred men, in the midst of a most galling fire. He had scarcely leaped on land, when he received four severe wounds, which retarded the onset. This gallant officer, being still able to stand, though suffering the most excruciating pain, ordered his men to move rapidly up the heights. Captain Ogilvie assumed the command, seconded by captain Wool, who was also wounded, and followed by lieutenants Kearney, Carr, Higginan, Sommers, and ensign Reeve, of the thirteenth. Lieutenants

Gansevoort and Randolph, ascended the rocks to the right of the fort, gave three cheers, and after several desperate charges, at the head of a handful of men, carried the heights, and drove the enemy down the hill in every direction. The enemy retreated behind a large stone house, and kept up their fire; but their batteries, with the exception of one gun, were silenced. The detachment under colonel Christie, on his second attempt, now landed. Considerable reinforcements soon after arrived, under captains Gibson, M'Chesney, and Lawrence; and colonels Mead, Strahan, Allen, and other militia officers. About this time, general Brock arrived in person, with the forty-ninth regiment, six hundred strong. Perceiving him approaching to the rear of the battery, captain Wool, who commanded at this point, ordered a detachment of about one hundred and sixty men, to charge. The detachment was driven back, but being reinforced, charged a second time. Encountering a great superiority of numbers, they were again repulsed, and on the point of being driven to the very verge of the precipice, when the officer, considering the situation hopeless, placed a white handkerchief on the point of a bayonet, in token of submission, which was instantly torn away by Captain Wool, who ordered the men to stand their ground. At this instant, colonel Christie advanced with a reinforcement, which increased the number of the detachment to three hundred and twenty. This officer now led on a desperate charge, and completely succeeded in putting to flight a regiment twice his numbers, and bearing the name of invincibles. General Brock, exasperated at this conduct, endeavoured to rally them, when he received three balls, which terminated his existence; his aid, captain M'Donald, at the same instant falling by his side, mortally wounded. At two o'clock, general Wadsworth, of the militia, and colonels Scott and Mullaney crossed over. Captain Wool having been ordered to retire to have his wounds dressed, again returned to the action. The forty-ninth being repulsed, and the British commander having fallen, the victory was thought to be complete, and general Van Rensselaer crossed over, for the purpose of immediately fortifying a camp, to pre-

pare against future attacks, should the enemy be reinforced. This duty he assigned to lieutenant Totten, an able engineer.

The fortune of the day was not yet decided. At three o'clock, the enemy having rallied, and being reinforced by several hundred Chippewa Indians, again advanced to the attack. At first our men were disposed to falter, but being animated by such leaders as colonel Christie and colonel Scott, marched boldly to the charge, and at the point of the bayonet, once more compelled the British, who were now the assailants, to retire. This was the third victory gained since morning, and had the contest ended here, it would have been one of the most glorious for our country. General Van Rensselaer perceiving that the men on the opposite side embarked but slowly, and fearing another conflict, recrossed for the purpose of expediting their departure. But what was his astonishment, on reaching the American side, when he found that they positively refused to embark! More than twelve hundred men under arms were drawn up on the bank, where they remained as idle spectators of the scene, and neither commands nor entreaties could prevail on them to move. They refused to do so on the ground of constitutional privilege; the same men, who a few days before had expressed so much impatience, that their ardour was restrained. It seems that this boiling ardour had already been cooled, by what they had witnessed on the opposite shore.

At four o'clock, the British being reinforced by eight hundred men from fort George, renewed the engagement with fresh vigour. General Van Rensselaer, perceiving that our men were now almost exhausted with fatigue, their ammunition nearly spent, was compelled, under the most painful sensations, to address a note to general Wadsworth, communicating the unexpected circumstance, and giving him permission to consult his own judgment, and at the same time despatched a number of boats, that in case it should be so resolved, he might return with his troops to the American side. A desperate contest soon followed, which was kept up for half an hour, by a continued discharge of musketry and artillery, when

our troops were gradually overpowered by numbers, their strength rapidly declined, and their hopes were subdued by the information they had by this time received. The militia attempted to re-embark, but in this they were frustrated. It being impossible to hold out any longer, and more overcome by the apathy of their countrymen, who stood looking coldly on, than by the strength of their foes, they at length surrendered themselves prisoners of war. During the greater part of the engagement with the last reinforcement, the regulars, not more than two hundred and fifty in number, bore the brunt of the action entirely alone. The prisoners were generally treated well by the British, but they imposed no restraint on their allies, who proceeded immediately to the work of stripping and scalping the slain, and even many of the wounded. Amongst other indignities which these wretches were not restrained from committing, were those offered to the body of ensign Morris, brother to our naval hero. Contrasted with this, it is worthy of being mentioned, that the guns of the American fort were fired during the funeral ceremony of general Brock, a brave and generous enemy. Even savages, had they chosen to inquire the meaning of this, ought to have learned a lesson of humanity, their civilized allies could not teach.

Every officer who crossed the river, it is said, distinguished himself. Colonel Scott, afterwards so justly celebrated, continued the greater part of the day in the hottest of the fight, and although dressed in uniform, and of a tall and elegant stature, did not receive the slightest wound. Several Indians afterwards declared that they had taken deliberate aim at him. A volunteer company of riflemen under lieutenant Smith, who took prisoner an Indian chief, when the enemy rallied a second time, was much distinguished. Lieutenant colonel Fenwick was severely wounded, but never left the ground during the action. Captains Gibson, Wool, and M'Chesney, were highly complimented by the general. The loss of the British and Indians is not exactly known; ours must have been at least one thousand in killed, wounded and prisoners. The greater part of the prisoners were taken to Montreal.

During the embarkation of the troops at Lewistown, a fire was opened from fort George, on the American fort Niagara, which was returned and kept up during the day on both sides. The battery commanded by captain M'Keon, which was managed with ability, set fire to several houses near the British fort. A twelve pounder happened to burst, and at the same time the opposite garrison beginning to throw shells, captain Leonard thought it prudent to leave the fort; but soon after, perceiving the British about to cross, he returned with a guard of twenty men, and kept possession during the night. The next evening he was joined by the remainder of the garrison. Three days afterwards the British batteries below fort Erie, opened a fire on the camp at Black Rock. One of the barracks was destroyed by a shell, which blew up the magazine, but no lives were lost.

The garrison of Niagara, having been considerably reinforced, was again attacked on the twenty-first, from the batteries of fort George. These places are situated nearly opposite each other, and at the entrance of the Niagara. The cannonading continued from sun-rise until dark, the enemy throwing upwards of three thousand red hot shot, and upwards of two hundred shells; several of the barracks and adjoining buildings were fired, but, through the indefatigable exertions of major Armistead, of the United States artillery, the fire was repeatedly extinguished. Colonel M'Feeley, who commanded the fort, ordered the different batteries to open, and the enemy's fire was returned with interest. Several houses in Newark, and about the fort, were burnt; a schooner lying under its guns was sunk, and one of their batteries for a time completely silenced. Captain M'Keon commanded in the south-east block-house, and captain Jack, of the militia artillery, in the north-east, the situation most exposed. The different batteries were commanded by lieutenants Reese and Hendal, both of which were very destructive. Lieutenant Gansvoort commanded the Salt battery; doctor Cooper of the militia had the command of a six-pounder. Lieutenant Reese having been wounded, his place was taken by captain Leonard, during the remainder of the day. During this severe bombardment, we had only four killed, and a

small number wounded, among whom was lieutenant Thomas. Colonel M'Feeley spoke in high terms of colonel Gray, major Armistead, captain Mulligan, and all the other officers and men. Such was their ardour, that having expended their wadding, the officers tore off their shirts and the soldiers their pantaloons, to be used for that purpose. An extraordinary instance of female bravery occurred on this occasion. The wife of a common soldier, of the name of Doyle, taken prisoner at Queens-town, and carried to Montreal, determined to revenge the treatment of her husband, volunteered her services, and obtained permission to assist at one of the batteries, where she continued to serve hot shot until the last gun was fired, although the enemy's shells continually fell around her, and every moment threatened destruction.

Shortly after the unfortunate battle of Queenstown, general Van Rensselaer resigned the command, which devolved on brigadier general Smyth, of the United States army. General Smyth announced his determination of retrieving the honour of the American arms, by another attempt on the British batteries and entrenchments on the opposite side. He conceived that the former attack had not been conducted with judgment, in the selection of the point of debarkation, directly in the face of their batteries, whereas it ought to have been between fort Erie and Chippewa. This he had at first recommended to general Van Rensselaer, and to the neglect of his intimation he attributed the failure of the former attempt. Having now the sole command, and being at liberty to carry into execution his own plan, he set about preparing a force for the purpose; that which he then had under his command being insufficient. As the most effectual mode to accomplish this, he issued a proclamation appealing to the public feeling and patriotism of the American people, and inviting volunteers from every part of the country. Every topick which could influence the hearts and minds of the people, was strongly urged; they were reminded of the exploits of their ancestors of the revolution; of the little honour which had thus far attended the prosecution of the war; the recent failure, and the disgraceful surrender of Hull. They were told

that even the Indians of the friendly six nations had offered their services, but that, through regard to the cause of humanity, he had refused to follow a disgraceful example, by letting loose these barbarous warriors upon the inhabitants of Canada. He then addressed himself particularly to the "Men of New-York," appealing to their patriotism, calling on them to retrieve the late disaster, and at the same time, by this step, secure their wives and children from the predatory and murderous incursions of the savage. This address was well calculated to reach the feelings of the moment, although eccentric in its style, and in some respects reprehensible, particularly in the reflections indulged at the expense of others. Moreover, it was not dictated by prudence as respected himself; for in case of a possible failure, he would naturally be exposed to ridicule, for what would then turn out a pompous and inflated rhodomontade. It was, however, not without some effect, particularly when seconded by an animated proclamation from general Porter, of the New-York militia. About the twenty-seventh of November, upwards of four thousand five hundred men, consisting of regulars, and the volunteers from Pennsylvania, New-York and Baltimore, were collected at Buffaloe; and the officers were actively engaged in drilling, equipping, and organizing them for the intended enterprise.

Seventy boats, and a number of scows, were prepared for the reception of the army, that they might be at once transported to the Canadian shore; but preparatory to the principal attack, two detachments, one under colonel Boerstler, and another under captain King, received orders to pass over before day; the first to destroy a bridge, about five miles below fort Erie, and capture the guard stationed there; the other to storm the British batteries. Before they reached the opposite shore, the enemy opened a heavy fire; the first detachment landed and took some prisoners, but failed in destroying the bridge. The other, under captain King, landed higher up at the Red House, drove the enemy, and then advanced to their batteries, which they stormed, and then spiked the cannon. Lieutenant Angus, with a number of marines, accidentally separated from captain King, and no reinforcements

arriving from the opposite side, they concluded that King and his party had been taken prisoners, and therefore returned. The party of King, now consisting of seventeen, besides captains Morgan and Sprowl, and five other officers, was in full possession of the works, while the enemy was completely dispersed. Finding, at length, that they could not expect to be supported, they resolved to return; but one boat could be found to transport them all; captains Sprowl and Morgan passed over with the prisoners, leaving captain King, who was soon after, with his small party, surrounded and taken prisoner. On the return of captain Sprowl, colonel Winder was ordered to pass over with about three hundred men. He instantly embarked, and led the van. His own boat was the only one which touched the opposite shore, the others having been swept down by the swiftness of the current.

From various causes the embarkation of the main body was retarded much beyond the appointed time, so that at twelve o'clock in the day, about two thousand men were at last ready to move. General Tannehill's volunteers, and colonel McClure's regiment, were drawn up ready for a second embarkation. The enemy by this time had collected on the opposite shore, and appeared ready to receive them. The departure of our troops was in the most unaccountable manner, delayed until late in the afternoon, when orders were given to debark. Much murmuring and discontents ensued; which were in some measure silenced; by assurances that another attempt would be made. It was now resolved to land about five miles below the navy-yard; and accordingly, on Monday evening, the thirty-ninth, all the boats were collected for the purpose. The whole body, with the exception of about two hundred men, were embarked at four o'clock; the men conducting themselves with great order and obedience, and affording every hope of success. Nothing was wanting but the word to move; when, after some delay, orders were suddenly given for the whole to land, accompanied with a declaration, that the invasion of Canada was given over for that season, while arrangements were made to go into winter quarters. One universal expression of indignation burst forth; the greater part of the

militia threw down their arms, and returned to their homes, and those who remained continually threatened the life of the general. Severe recriminations passed between him and general Porter, who accused him of cowardice and of unofficer-like deportment. General Smyth, in vindication of his conduct, alleged that he had positive instructions not to risk an invasion with less than three thousand men, and that the number embarked did not exceed fifteen hundred. Be this as it may, great dissatisfaction was excited through the country, and his military reputation, from that time, rapidly declined in public estimation. This affair had certainly an unfavourable aspect, and was not only prejudicial to our affairs in general, but exceedingly discouraging to the nation. Throughout the whole of this year, we were continually suffering the effects of our total want of experience in war. Every thing seemed to baffle our calculations, and to disappoint our hopes, particularly in our movements against Canada, although many acts of gallantry were performed both by regulars and militia.

It is now time to turn our attention to the northern army, collecting on the borders of the St. Lawrence. But little was done in this quarter, until late in the autumn. At the declaration of war, but a small number of troops were stationed at any point along this frontier: and it would necessarily require a considerable length of time before the militia could be embodied and marched, or the regular troops, newly enlisted or already on foot, could be collected from over an immense surface of country such as ours. It was confidently calculated, that the upper provinces of Canada would fall an easy conquest to our troops of the northwestern army, and of the army of the centre, which might then move down, and join those on the St. Lawrence, and, long before the winter, the war would be carried to Montreal. But the unexpected and lamentable surrender of Hull, produced a total change in the situation of affairs. It was not until late in the autumn, that any thing worthy of note occurred in the northern army.

On the fifteenth of September, twenty-five barges of the British passed up the St. Lawrence, and were attack-

ed by a party of militia from Ogdensburg, and after a severe contest, the enemy was forced to abandon their boats, and fly for shelter to the woods; but soon after, receiving reinforcements, they compelled the militia to retire. Sometime after this, captain Forsyth made an incursion into the enemy's country, with a party of his riflemen, and after twice defeating a body of regulars of superiour numbers, burnt a block house, containing the publick stores, and returned with the loss of only one man. In revenge for that attack, the British, on the second of October, determined to attempt the destruction of Ogdensburg. A heavy fire was opened from the breast-works, at the village of Prescott, situated nearly opposite. On the fourth, they attempted to cross the St. Lawrence, and storm the town, and embarked in forty boats, with about fifteen men in each; but they were warmly received by general Brown, of the New-York militia, who commanded here in person. A sharp action continued for nearly two hours, when they were compelled to abandon their design, leaving one of the boats in our hands, and suffering a considerable loss.

Colonel Pike, to whose zeal and indefatigable exertions, the army was even at this time much indebted, on the nineteenth passed into the enemy's territory, surprised a blockhouse defended by a considerable body of English and Indians, put them to flight, and destroyed the publick stores. Skirmishes like these were not unfrequent, until the close of autumn, and even occurred during the winter; but nothing of moment transpired in this quarter, until the beginning of the year.

A new scene of warfare was about to open, upon those vast inland seas, which constitute so remarkable a feature of our continent. For the first time, their waves were to be lighted up with all the sublimity of naval combat: and they soon bore witness to achievements as glorious as those which immortalized our heroes on the ocean. In consequence of the failure of our arms at Detroit, it became necessary to form a navy on the lakes. We were now without a single armed vessel on lake Erie, and our whole force on lake Ontario was the brig Oneida, sixteen guns, commanded by lieutenant Woolsey.

In October, commodore Chauncey, with a body of seamen, arrived at Sackett's Harbour, for the purpose of carrying this design into effect; he instantly purchased every trader capable of being fitted up as a vessel of war, and ordered lieutenant Elliot, as we have seen, to organize a naval force on Lake Erie. That his preparations proceeded with rapidity, cannot be doubted, when we find, that on the sixth of November he considered himself able to contend with the enemy's whole force. Having received information that the enemy's fleet had sailed down the lake, for the purpose of bringing up reinforcements to fort George, he determined to intercept him at the False Dukes on his way up. The force of commodore Chauncey, created in this short space of time, was composed of the Oneida, sixteen guns, in which he sailed; the Governour Tompkins, lieutenant Brown, six guns; the Growler, lieutenant Mix, of five guns; the Conquest, lieutenant Elliot; of two guns; the Pert, Arundle, of two guns; and the Julia, Trant, of one thirty pounder; making in all thirty-two guns. The vessels of the enemy, which were supposed to have passed up the lakes, constituted nearly the whole force of the British, and consisted of the Royal George, twenty-six guns; ship Earl Moira, eighteen guns; schooners Prince Regent, eighteen guns; Duke of Gloucester, fourteen guns; Tarento, fourteen guns; Governour Simcoe, twelve guns.

On the eighth, the squadron fell in with the Royal George, but lost sight of her during the night, having chased her into the bay of Quanti. In the morning she was discovered in Kingston channel. The commodore had made up his mind to board her; but the wind blowing directly in, and the enemy being too well protected by the guns of the batteries, he changed his intention. The next morning he beat up in good order, and commenced an attack on the Royal George, under a heavy fire both from this ship and from the batteries. The Conquest, the Julia, the Pert, and the Growler, pushed forward in succession; afterwards the brig General Hamilton, and the Governour Tompkins; shortly after, the whole fire of the batteries was turned upon the brig, and continued hot on both sides for an hour, when the Royal George cut her

cables, and ran higher up the bay. The squadron being now exposed to the cross fire of the batteries, and not deeming it prudent to pursue the *Royal George*, hauled off to the wind, and made sail out of the bay. This was certainly a most daring exploit, and, to say the least of it, merited success. The *Royal George* suffered severely in her hull; the shot from the gun vessels struck her frequently, while the loss of commodore Chauncey was very inconsiderable. The commander of the *Pert, Arundel*, was wounded by the bursting of her gun, but refusing to quit the deck, was knocked overboard and drowned. The commodore captured a schooner off the harbour, and sent the *Growler* as her convoy past the entrance, for the purpose of decoying the *Royal George*, but without success. She then sailed with her prize for Sackett's Harbour. On her way she discovered the *Prince Regent* and *Earl Moira*, convoying a sloop to Kingston; she immediately concealed herself behind a point, and when the armed vessels had passed, she ran out and captured the schooner, and brought her into Sackett's Harbour. The prize had on board twelve thousand dollars in specie, and the baggage of general Brock, with captain Brock, the brother of that officer. Commodore Chauncey soon after arriving, received the intelligence respecting the *Earl Moira*, and immediately set off in the midst of a severe storm, to intercept her at the False Ducks; but returned to the Harbour without being able to fall in with her.

He now occupied himself chiefly in superintending the new ship *Madison*, which was launched on the twenty-sixth of November. The winter set in soon after, and put an end to any further naval incident for the season.

CHAPTER V.

Meeting of Congress—Proposal for an Armistice—Reverses of Napoleon—Measures for carrying on the War—Blockade of our coast—The Southern Indians—Tecumseh's visit to the Creeks—War with the Seminoles—Third naval victory over a British Frigate—Disasters of our Arms to the West.

THE congress of the United States again assembled on the fourth of November, after a recess unusually short, on account of the new and interesting state of our affairs. Party spirit unfortunately prevailed among us with unusual warmth, and it was not difficult to foretell that no small portion would find its way into the national councils. Recriminations of French influence, and improper submission to the outrages of Great Britain, very much embittered this animosity. The existence of party spirit is necessary and healthful to our political system; it is the current of the stream, which preserves it pure and untainted. In despotisms there is no party spirit; there all is conducted in the darkness and secrecy of intrigue. But party has its evils. In peace, it renovates the flagging energies of the nation, and keeps all things pure and sound; on the contrary, in a period of war, this animosity may clog the efforts of the party in power, and may be a useful ally to the enemy. Unfortunately there prevailed a strong disposition to thwart the measures of the administration, and in this way compel it to sue for peace, without perhaps sufficiently reflecting, that the enemy might not be disposed to grant it, upon other terms than such as would be disgraceful to the nation. It is not becoming a true lover of his country, to desire that the government, with which the nation, as respects others, is identified, should be disgraced, in order that power may be transferred to better hands. This would not be the maxim of Washington. But on this subject it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw the exact line between a manly and laudable opposition to what we conceive to be wrong, and such intemperance as may endanger the character and safety of the country. One of the eastern states,

where the opposition to the war was most violent: it was voted to be immoral and impolitick to rejoice at the success of our arms; of this vote they afterwards became ashamed, and ordered it to be erased from their journals.

The administration, soon after the war, had manifested a wish for the restoration of peace, could it be done consistently with prudence. About the time of the declaration of war in this country, the prince regent had repealed his orders in council, one of the principal causes of hostilities: an act, which was by no means dictated by a sense of what was due to justice and to us, but by the urgency of the particular interests of Great Britain. Having repealed them, he considered himself entitled to the same regard as if they had been expressly repealed on our account; and demanded that hostilities, on our part, should cease. To this the president replied, that being now at war, the United States would not put an end to hostilities, unless a provision were made for a general settlement of differences, and a cessation of the abominable practice of impressment, pending the negotiation. In the meantime, a law would be passed forbidding the employment of British seamen in our vessels, of whatsoever kind. A law to this effect was passed during the session.

Shortly after the commencement of the war, a proposition for an armistice had been made by the governor of Canada, but was rejected as a matter of course. The American minister in London, was authorised to agree to a cessation of hostilities, even on the unofficial assurance that the practice of impressment would be discontinued, during the armistice. This was rejected. A proposition was afterwards made by admiral Warren, but which required as a preliminary to every other step, that our armies should be immediately withdrawn, and the orders to our cruisers recalled. This he alleged, was in consequence of our being the aggressors, and as such it became us to take the first step, and unconditionally throw down our arms. Here it might be asked, whether this country has ever experienced so much good faith and forbearance from Great Britain, as to justify such confidence? But was she not the aggressor, by her own acknowledgement? for, by the repeal of the orders in council, if on our ac-

count, she acknowledged herself to have violated our neutral rights. Moreover, it was well known that she had, at that moment, more than two thousand impressed American seamen, confined as prisoners of war, and persisted in refusing every arrangement which might remedy in future the odious practice. So strangely inconsistent are the prettexts of injustice. These attempts at reconciliation had failed, when the emperor of Russia interposed his mediation, which, on the part of our government, was instantly accepted: on being made known to England, it was declined, as being incompatible with her naval interests; but she professed a willingness to enter into a direct negociation; this, it will be seen, was merely thrown out as a pretext, to prolong the war at her pleasure.

A most important change had taken place in the affairs of Europe. Napoleon had experienced a reverse, proportioned to the vastness of his designs. This man, intoxicated with his former success, and with the vile flattery which is always paid to the despot, had begun to think himself more than mortal. It is thought that he had conceived the idea of universal empire, naturally enough the ultimate object of a conqueror; for what conqueror ever set bounds to his ambition? The vanity of his scheme, if any such ever entered his head, of bringing all Europe to his feet, of mastering the fleet of England, and then extending his power over the globe, was now fully demonstrated. The joy which many of our fellow citizens expressed on this occasion, was perhaps ill judged. The fall of a despot and a tyrant, is certainly an agreeable theme to a republican; but the immediate connexion of this event with our welfare, was not easily traced. It was very evident that the enmity both of France and England towards this country, proceeded from the same cause, and, considering human nature, a very natural cause; to wit, the circumstance of our prospering and growing rich from their dissensions. We had but little to fear that we should be molested by any European power, attempting to conquer our vast country; and as to universal dominion, England, in her claim to the sovereignty of the seas, already possessed it, as far as the thing, in

its nature, was capable of being possessed. As to Europe, the mad attempt of Napoleon had been followed by an overthrow so complete, that so far from being dangerous to its repose in future, it became a matter of doubt, with very enlightened politicians, whether he would be able to maintain his own ground, and whether if France were reduced to a second rate power, Europe would not have to fear a more formidable enemy in Russia. Nothing but the pacifick temper of the present sovereign, would be a guarantee to the safety of the neighbouring nations. The consequence of the rapid decline of the power of Napoleon, would be highly favourable to England, in the disposal of her forces against this country; and elated by her success against France, it was not probable that she would feel much disposition to treat with us on reasonable terms.

The first business, on the meeting of congress, with a view to the war, which now occupied its chief attention, was the providing an additional force. Enlistments had been extremely slow, and sufficient encouragement had not been held out for recruits. It was proposed to receive into the service of the United States, twenty thousand volunteers, for a year, to be clothed and paid in the same manner as regular troops. The inefficiency of mere militia, under no discipline, and under no control, had been sufficiently seen, both during the present and the revolutionary war. But there was no mode of remedying the evil; for regular soldiers could not be raised, or at least, in sufficient numbers.

The navy attracted much attention. On this subject there prevailed the most perfect unanimity; and it was resolved, that it should be fostered as the best and safest reliance of our country. Such as might have once been inimical to it, became its warmest friends. The national legislature now engaged with great assiduity, in devising such measures as were necessary for a vigorous prosecution of the war, and as would tend to remedy the evils already experienced.

The seaboard, although sometimes threatened by the enemy, had not yet experienced any serious molestation. In the month of December, the whole coast was proclaimed

ed in a state of blockade, but with no force actually applied. This paper blockade had no pretence of retaliation, like that declared against the coast of France; and the United States did not choose to follow an example so contrary to the laws of nations, and in turn declare the coast of England in a state of blockade, and under that pretence interrupt the commerce of neutrals, going to her ports. The British vessels were chiefly employed in the protection of her commerce against our cruisers, and her attention was so much taken up with the mighty affairs which were then passing on the continent, that we fortunately remained, during this season, unmolested; at least our homes and our firesides were not disturbed.

A war, however, threatened us in another quarter, to which we now looked with no small anxiety. The southern Indians, equally ferocious in their modes of warfare, and perhaps more daring than the northern, began to exhibit signs of hostility. No people had ever less cause to complain. The Creeks, within the territorial limits of the United States, had been uniformly protected by the Americans; intruders upon their lands were turned off at the point of the bayonet; immense sums were expended for the purpose of teaching them the arts of civilized life; persons were employed to reside among them, for the purpose of teaching those arts, and implements of agriculture were furnished at the publick expense. This humane system, commenced by Washington, was strictly pursued by subsequent administrations. The effects were visible in the course of a few years. Their country and climate, probably the best in the United States, were capable of affording every thing essential to their happiness. The domestick arts had taken root amongst them; that strong stimulant to industry, separate property on the soil, was beginning to be understood, they possessed numerous herds, and all the domestick animals; their situation was, in every respect, equal to that of the peasants in many parts of Europe. They had thrown off their clothing of skins, and wore cottons of their own manufacture; and their population was rapidly increasing. They had always lived on terms of friendship with the United States;

their lands had never been encroached upon; and they had become considerably intermixed, by marriages, with the whites. According to one of their laws, no white man, except the Indian agent, is permitted to reside in their territory, unless he marries a native.

The benevolent societies of the United States, had opened schools through the country, for the purpose of giving the finishing to this state of manners; for in every other respect they had entirely thrown off the savage habits. Nearly the same state of improvement existed amongst the other tribes, the Choctaws, Chickasaws, and the Cherokees. The same regular industry was visible in the villages of these people, in their daily occupations, in their cultivation of the soil; in their attention to their lands, and even in the construction of their dwellings, which in many cases, were built by white carpenters employed for the purpose, and little inferior to the generality of white settlers. So far, indeed, had this civilization advanced, that the luxuries of coffee and sugar, and many other articles, had been introduced among them; and it was no uncommon thing to see their women riding to some neighbouring town, dressed in neat cotton garments of their own weaving, on side-saddles manufactured by the whites, which had cost them twenty-five or thirty dollars. Many of them had slaves, who laboured in the fields, or were employed in the various occupations of the household.

To seduce these people into a war, would be an act of cruelty to them, and, hostilities on their part, would be the extreme of folly. For although, if united, their numbers would be thrice that of the northern Indians, yet being completely surrounded by white settlements, their destruction must be inevitable. The United States' agent, colonel Hawkins, an enlightened man, had devoted his life to the civilization of these unfortunate people, and had acquired a considerable ascendancy. But, amongst them, there was a large portion of the idle and the worthless, who had been too lazy to acquire property, and who were inclined to return to the old state of savage manners, because more favourable to their loose, unrestrained propensities, than the habits newly introduced, which they

pretended to despise. During the summer, while war raged on the northern frontier, the disorderly Creeks began to show much uneasiness; they collected in small bands, roamed about the country, committed depredations on the property of the well-ordered class, and often upon the whites. Shortly after the surrender of Hull, this disposition broke out into open violence. A party of these vagabond Muscogees fell upon some people, who were descending the Mississippi, and murdered them near the mouth of the Ohio. The affair was represented to the nation, who caused the perpetrators to be seized and put to death. A civil war, soon after, was the consequence, in which the savage part, as might be expected, prevailed; and the greater number of those who had been friendly to the United States, were either obliged to fly, or to join their standard.

Other causes contributed to bring about this ruinous state of things. The celebrated chief, Tecumseh, had, the year before, visited all the southern tribes, for the purpose of kindling a spirit unfriendly to the United States. This savage Demosthenes, wherever he went, called councils of their tribes, and with that bold and commanding eloquence, which he possessed in a degree infinitely superior to what has ever been witnessed amongst these people, exhausted every topic calculated to operate on their minds, and alienate their affections from their benefactors. Amongst all these nations his speeches had great effect, but amongst the Creeks particularly, although the more considerate rejected his interference. Amid the usual topics of his discourses, he was in the habit of reproaching them with their civilization; and in the keenest and most sarcastick manner, contrasting their degenerate effeminacy, with every thing that was great and noble in the opinion of Indians. Demosthenes, in his reproaches of his countrymen, was not more terribly vehement and audacious. Against the United States, he pronounced the most furious invectives, which might be compared, to the philippicks of the Grecian orator; he unquestionably left a strong impression on the minds of all the southern Indians.

There existed, however, another more immediate cause of their enmity towards us. The Seminoles and the tribes of the Creeks who resided within the territory of Spain, were frequently supplied with arms and presents from the British government, with a view of engaging them to make war upon the United States, and also to prevail upon the other Creeks to join them. The town of Pensacola, which was then, to every purpose, under the control of Great Britain, was the usual place at which these presents were distributed, and where the vagabond Indians could be supplied with arms; and they resorted to it, from all the different tribes, for the purpose of receiving them. It was no difficult matter, thus to excite hostilities; unfortunately the event proved them but too successful. Such was the disposition of the southern Indians, during the first year of the war.

The Choctaws, Chickasaws and Cherokees, the latter particularly, being further removed from British influence, and within reach of our power, were disposed to be friendly; but many of their restless young men, in spite of the nation, strayed off and joined our enemies. Hostilities did not commence on the part of any of these Indians, within our territory, during the first year of the war. The government, however, fearing the worst, called on the governours of Georgia and Tennessee, to hold their militia in readiness; and general Jackson, at the head of two thousand men, early in the spring, marched through the Choctaw and Chickasaw country to Natchez, a distance of five hundred miles; but every thing appearing peaceful in this quarter, he shortly after returned. This expedition had the effect of fixing the tribes through which it passed, and of retarding the Creek war. The tribes within the limits of the Spanish part of Florida, on the contrary, declared themselves at once, and brandished the scalping knife against the frontier of Georgia.

The Seminoles, very soon after the declaration of war, began to make incursions into Georgia, accompanied by a number of negro runaways, who had taken refuge amongst them. They proceeded to the usual work of murdering the inhabitants, and plundering their property. Early in September, a party of marines and about twenty volun-

teers, under captain Williams, were attacked near Davis's Creek, by about fifty Indians and negroes. After a desperate resistance, in which captains Williams and Fort were both severely wounded, the party retreated, leaving the savages in possession of their wagons and teams.

On the 24th of the same month, colonel Newman, of the Georgia volunteers, with about one hundred and seventeen men, marched to the attack of the Lochway towns. When within a few miles of the first of these, he met a party of one hundred and fifty Indians on horseback, who instantly dismounted and prepared for battle. Colonel Newman ordered a charge, and the Indians were driven into one of the swamps, which abound in this part of the country. As they fled, the fire of the musketry did considerable execution, and, amongst others of the slain, they left their king* in the hands of the whites. The Indians discovering this, with a spirit which deserves to be admired, made several desperate charges, in order to recover the body of the chief, and were each time driven back. But in another attempt, still more desperately furious, they succeeded in carrying off the dead body; when they retired from the field, after a severe conflict of two hours. This, however, did not free the Georgians from their unpleasant situation. Before night, the Indians returned with considerable reinforcements of negroes, and after a loss more severe than the first, they again fled. The volunteers now found their situation becoming every moment more critical; the number of their wounded, would neither permit them to retreat, nor to advance, and the enemy was hourly increasing on all sides. A messenger was despatched for reinforcements; and in the meanwhile, they threw up a small breast-work. Here they remained until the fourth of October, waiting for assistance; having in the meantime repelled numerous assaults from the Indians, who continued to harass them day and night. The Indians observing that a perfect silence prevailed within the breast-works, suspected that they had been deserted in the night; and approached under this assurance, until within thirty or forty paces, when the Georgians suddenly shewed themselves above the breast-work, fired their pieces, and sent them yelling to the

* King Paine

swamps. The volunteers then decamped, and reached unmolested the village of Peccolatta, whence they had set out. Intelligence of this affair reached the government about the commencement of the session of Congress, and it was found necessary to make suitable preparations to meet a war in this quarter. The defence of this important frontier was assigned to general Pinckney, of South Carolina, a gentleman of great distinction and ability, who was appointed a brigadier in the service of the United States.

Congress had not been long in session, when the public feelings were once more excited, by news of the most flattering kind. Another naval victory was announced, not less splendid than those of the Constitution and the Macedonian; the flag of another British frigate was transmitted to our capital, and was placed amongst the other trophies of our naval prowess.

In October, the Constitution, commodore Bainbridge, and the Hornet, captain Lawrence, sailed from New-York, and were to effect a junction with the Essex, captain Porter, which sailed about the same time from the Delaware; the object of which was to cruise in the South Seas, and destroy the British fisheries and commerce in that quarter. The junction not happening at the time and place appointed, commodore Porter passed round Cape Horn alone. In the meanwhile, on the twenty-ninth December, a few leagues west of St. Salvador, the Constitution, which had a few days before parted company with the Hornet, descried a British frigate. Commodore Bainbridge tacked sail and stood for her. At two P. M. the enemy was within half a mile of the Constitution, and to windward, having hauled down his colours, except the union jack, which was at the mizenmast head. A gun was then fired ahead, to make him shew his colours, which was returned by a broadside. The enemy's colours being now hoisted, the action commenced with round and grape; but he kept at so great a distance that this had little effect: and in this position, if he were brought nearer, the Constitution would be exposed to raking; at thirty minutes past two, both ships were within good cannister distance, when the Constitution's wheel

was shot away. At forty minutes past two, the fore and main-sail were set, and commodore Bainbridge, being now determined to close with her, luffed up for that purpose, and in ten minutes after, the enemy's jib-boom got foul of the Constitution's mizen rigging, and in another ten minutes, his bowsprit and jib-boom were shot away. At five minutes past three, his maintopmast was shot away just above the cap. This was followed by the loss of his gaff and spanker boom, and soon after his mainmast went nearly by the board. At fifteen minutes past three the enemy was completely silenced, and his colours at the mainmast being down, it was thought he had surrendered; under this idea, the Constitution shot ahead to repair damages; after which discovering the enemy's flag still flying, she wore, stood for him in a handsome style, and got close athwart his bows in an effectual position for raking, when his mainmast went entirely by the board, and he lay an unmanageable wreck. He now struck his colours, and was taken possession of by lieutenant Parker, and found to be the British frigate Java, of thirty-eight guns, but carrying forty-nine, commanded by a distinguished officer, captain Lambert, who was mortally wounded. She had on board four hundred men, besides one hundred seamen whom she was carrying out to the East Indies, for the service there. The Constitution had nine men killed, and twenty-five wounded; the Java sixty killed, and one hundred and twenty wounded. She had on board despatches for St. Helena, Cape of Good Hope and the different establishments in the East Indies, and China, with copper for a seventy-four, building at Bombay. There were also on board a number of passengers, among whom were lieutenant general Hislop, governor of Bombay; major Walker; and one staff major; captain Marshall, master and commander of the Royal Navy; and several officers appointed to ships in the East Indies.

The conduct of all the American officers on this occasion, was as conspicuous for gallantry during the engagement, as for humanity to the vanquished. It is this true chivalrick courtesy, which gives estimation to valour, lieutenant Aylwin, so favourably known to the reader,

received a severe wound of which he soon after died. He was in the act of firing his pistols at the enemy from the quarter deck hammock, when he received a ball in his shoulder blade, which threw him on the deck. Midshipman Dulany, who had fought by his side in both actions of this ship, ordered two men of his division to carry him below; to this he would not consent, until he saw the issue of the battle, at the same time declaring that no man should quit his post on his account. Lieutenant Parker, James Dulany, of Pennsylvania, and James Packett, of Virginia, were much distinguished; the latter was afterwards presented with a sword by his native state, and was promoted to a lieutenancy. Many extraordinary instances of bravery were manifested by the seamen, one of whom, after being mortally wounded, lay upon deck during a great part of the action, apparently expiring; but no sooner was it announced that the enemy had struck, than he raised himself up, gave three cheers, fell back and expired.

On the first of January, the commodore finding the prize in such a state as to render it impossible to bring her in, and leaving every thing on board except the prisoners' baggage, blew her up. On arriving at St. Salvador the commodore received the publick acknowledgements of governour Hislop, who presented him with an elegant sword in consideration of the polite treatment which he had shewn. He released the private passengers without considering them as prisoners; the publick passengers, officers and crew, were released on their parole. At this place the Constitution met with the Hornet, and leaving this vessel to blockade the Bonne Citoyenne, the commodore sailed for the United States, changing the original destination for the South Seas.

On the arrival of commodore Bainbridge in the United States, he was universally hailed by the applauses of his countrymen; he received the freedom of the city of New-York in a gold box; a piece of plate from the citizens of Philadelphia, and the thanks of many of the state legislatures. Congress also presented him a medal, and voted fifty thousand dollars to himself, officers and crew.

In the midst of these affairs, news of fresh disasters to the westward, and accompanied by circumstances such as rarely occur in the annals of history, tended much to temper the publick joy for the second victory of the Constitution.

CHAPTER VI.

Harrison returns to Ohio—General Winchester sends a detachment to protect Frenchtown—Colonel Lewis defeats the British and Indians—Winchester arrives with reinforcements—Battle of the River Raisin—Shocking conduct of the British and their allies—Harrison's return—Siege of Fort Meigs—Defeat of Dudley—The siege raised—Exploit of Major Ball.

WE have seen with what indefatigable industry general Harrison was engaged, in placing the western frontier in a posture of defence, and in attempting to regain what we had lost. The Indian tribes had been made to feel the war in their own country, and were driven to such a distance by the destruction of their villages, as to prevent them from annoying our settlements; they were compelled to remove their wives and children to the distant British establishments, in order to obtain the means of subsistence. The close of the season was now chiefly occupied in strengthening the frontier posts, and in establishing others. Great exertions were made by governour Meigs, of Ohio, to keep up the necessary supply of men, and to provide the means of subsistence. General Harrison established his head quarters at Franklinton, whence he could with greater facility organize and distribute to the different forts, the reinforcements and supplies which must arrive. His object was to concentrate a considerable force at the Rapids, and thence, unless a change of circumstances forbade, proceed to Detroit. The government was compelled, in consequence of the taking of that place, to transport artillery and publick stores at an enormous expense across the mountains, and down the Ohio;

and afterwards to the different forts. This necessarily consumed much time, and delayed the operations of the army.

In the meanwhile, general Winchester continued at fort Defiance, with about eight hundred men; many of the volunteers having returned home on the expiration of their term of service. Those who remained were chiefly from Kentucky, and the greater part ranked amongst its most respectable citizens. Early in the month of January, general Winchester received intimations from the inhabitants of the village of Frenchtown, which is situated on the river Raisin, between the Rapids and Detroit, that a large body of British and Indians were about to concentrate at this point, for the purpose of preventing the further progress of the Americans. The inhabitants became alarmed at their situation, besought the Americans to march to their protection, as they would probably be exposed to the horrors of Indian massacre, in the midst of ferocious savages, whom the British were obliged to indulge, that they might be kept in a good humour. Threats against them had, besides, been thrown out by one of the Indian chiefs. The sensibility of the young American volunteers, officers and privates, was strongly excited, and they earnestly besought the general to lead them to the defence of the distressed inhabitants. With some reluctance, he yielded to their wishes, and contrary to the general plan of the commander-in-chief, resolved to send a force to their relief. Accordingly, on the seventeenth of January, he detached a body of men under colonels Lewis and Allen, with orders to wait at Presque Isle, until joined by the main body.

On their arrival, information was received that an advance party of British and Indians, had already taken possession of Frenchtown. It was determined to march instantly and attack them. As they drew near, the enemy became apprised of their approach, and prepared for their reception. Colonel Allen commanded the right wing, major Graves the left, and major Madison the centre. On coming to the river, which was bridged with ice, they displayed and moved forward under a fire from a howitzer and musketry. Majors Graves and Madison,

with their battalions, were ordered to dislodge the enemy from the houses and picketing, which they in a moment effected, under a shower of bullets, and drove the British and Indians to the woods. Colonel Allen made a simultaneous movement upon their left, and after several spirited charges, compelled these to take the wood also. Here availing themselves of the fences and fallen timber, they attempted to make a stand; but were attacked a second time, and after a conflict more obstinate than the first, they again fled. They now attempted to draw their pursuers into a wood; and partly succeeding, they charged in turn furiously, but were unable to break the American line. A severe conflict now ensued, but the enemy was finally beaten, pursued with a continual charge for several miles, and entirely dispersed. The American loss was twelve killed, and fifty-five wounded: that of the enemy could not well be ascertained, but fifteen of the Indians were left on the field. The volunteers having thus gallantly effected their object, encamped on the spot, where they remained until the twentieth, when they were joined by general Winchester. With this addition, their whole force exceeded seven hundred and fifty men.

Six hundred men were placed within a line of pickets, and the remainder, to the number of one hundred and fifty, encamped in the open field. On the morning of the twenty-second, a combined force of about fifteen hundred men, under Proctor and the Indian chiefs Round-head and Split-log, suddenly attacked our little army. They were in an instant ready for the reception of the enemy, who planted six pieces of artillery, and opened a heavy fire, accompanied with musketry, against the slight breast-work of pickets. The body of men belonging to the encampment, and composing the right wing, was soon overpowered by numbers, and endeavoured to retreat across the river. Two companies of fifty men each, seeing the critical situation of their comrades, sallied out of the breast-work to their relief, but shared the same fate. Nearly the whole of these unfortunate men were either cut off, or surrendered themselves prisoners to the British, under promise of protection. The left wing within the pickets, still continued a cool and steady resistance.

Three successive assaults were made by the British forty-first, but they were driven back, with the loss of thirty killed and one hundred wounded. When the right wing broke at the commencement of the action, great efforts had been made by general Winchester and colonel Lewis, to rally and bring them within the pickets; but in the attempt these officers were taken prisoners. Notwithstanding these misfortunes, and the overwhelming force which assailed them on every side, they still continued, with firmness and determination never surpassed, to repulse every assault of the enemy, until eleven o'clock in the day, making prodigious slaughter in his ranks.

Finding at length that it would be vain to contend openly with such men, resolved to defend themselves to the last, and that even if they had now been successful, their victory would have been dearly bought, the enemy attempted to prevail on them to surrender. The general was told by colonel Proctor, that unless his men surrendered, they would be delivered over to the fury of the savages, or what amounts to the same thing, no responsibility would be taken for their conduct, and that the houses of the village would be burnt. The general sent a flag communicating these particulars, and stating that in order to preserve the remainder of his brave troops, he had agreed to surrender them as prisoners of war, on condition of their being protected from the savages, of their being allowed to retain their private property, and of having their side arms returned them. The flag passed three times, the Americans unwilling to surrender with arms in their hands, until they had received a positive engagement from a British colonel that they should not be murdered, and that they should have the privilege of burying the dead. Thirty-five officers, and four hundred and fifty non-commissioned officers and men, still remained, after fighting six hours against artillery, surrounded by the yells of a thousand savages, waiting like wolves for their prey. At this time the killed, wounded and missing, of the little army, including those that had been outside the picket, amounted to more than three hundred. The loss of the British could not have been less. The little band, thus solicited by their general, and giving way to that

ray of hope which the bravest men in desperate situations will seize, at last consented to a surrender.

The office of the historian sometimes imposes a melancholy duty. The mind may be allowed to indulge a generous satisfaction, in recording those actions where a high, but mistaken ambition, calls forth our energies at the expense of humanity. Who can read without admiring, the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, and what heart can be insensible to the recital of the fate of Leonidas and his immortal band! The virtues of such men, their fortitude, their love of country, their unconquerable minds, give a sanctity to their fate; and while we grieve for them, we rejoice that we also are men. Far otherwise when we trace, in characters of blood, the cold, deliberate, fiend-like depravity, which assimilates men to the most odious and ferocious of the brute creation.

The task I must now fulfil is painful: I must speak of such things as I almost shudder to name; neither can it be done without tearing open the yet bleeding wounds of my country. But faithful history forbids that they should be passed over in silence; they must stand forth in all the awfulness of truth: and that impartial judgment must be passed upon them, which will doom them to the detestation of all posterity. The vengeance of heaven does not sleep. There is a measure of retributive justice even in this world, which sooner or later overtakes the swiftest guilt. Not the most infuriated passions of the worst of savages, ever generated a more shocking scene of cruelties than were practised towards a band of brave men, fighting in honourable battle, and who deserved statues of their country. Impelled by feelings of humanity, they marched to protect the feeble and the helpless from savage violence: and assailed by overwhelming numbers, they might have contended to the last man; but yielding to the solicitations of their captured general, to the threats of conflagration and murder, to the innocent people of the village, they surrendered in an evil hour to a faithless and treacherous foe, that they might be consigned to cruel suffering, to butchery, to murder, to unrelenting torture, to every species of savage death. Well might those disposed to wage such a war, wish to destroy the pen of

history. The pen of history cannot be broken.* At its command, the sword of vengeance shall leap from its scabbard. Would for the honour of Britain; would for the sake of humanity; would for the sake of our common relationship to a nation in which there exist many of the most generous and refined, that the odious tale of the river Raisin and Frenchtown, might be consigned to eternal oblivion. But it cannot be. The sacred call of truth must be obeyed. The savage and wanton massacre of our heroick countrymen, in the presence of a British officer, has not been denied, or palliated. Other atrocities the perpetrators have attempted to cover, by some flimsy veil of unsubstantial excuse, but this charge has always been met with silence. They have not dared directly to deny; and, gracious heaven, where could they find an excuse! Let the virtuous Briton, who reads this page, blush for his countrymen; let the posterity or the nation to which we are so closely related, shed a tear upon it, and may future generations of Americans, for the sake of the common relationship they bear to a Sidney, a Russel, a Chat-ham, and a Howard, generously forgive. They cannot forget.

Scarcely had the Americans surrendered, under the stipulation of protection from the British officer, than our brave citizens now discovered too late, that they were reserved to be butchered in cold blood. Of the right wing, but a small number had escaped; the work of scalping and stripping the dead, and murdering those who could no longer resist, was suffered to go on without restraint. The infernal work was now to begin with those who had so bravely defended themselves. The infamous Proctor and the British officers turned a deaf ear to the just remonstrances of these unhappy men. Contrary to express stipulations, the swords were taken from the sides of the officers, many of them stripped almost naked, and robbed. The brave dead were stripped and scalped, and their bodies shockingly mutilated. The tomahawk put an end at once to the sufferings of many

* In the Vandal mutilations of the beautiful naval monument at Washington the pen of the figure representing history was broken.

of the wounded who could not rise; in allusion to which, some days afterwards a British officer observed, "The Indians are excellent doctors." The prisoners, who now remained; with but a few exceptions, instead of being guarded by British soldiers, were delivered to the charge of the Indians, to be marched in the rear of the army to Malden. This was, in other words, a full permission to indulge their savage thirst of blood; and in this they were not disappointed, for the greater part of these ill-fated men were murdered on the way, through mere wantonness. Perhaps, as a christian, if he be such, Proctor attempted to put a stop to these butcheries; no—there was not even an attempt; and in this country we know well that it was amply in his power to have prevented these things. But if he were not, it neither lessens his villany nor the infamy of the British, in associating with such allies. All such as became too weak for want of nourishment, from excessive fatigue, from their wounds, in this most inclement season of the year, were at once despatched. But small was the number of this little army, that ever reached the British garrison; the greater part of the prisoners had been carried off by the Indians, that they might satiate their fiend-like hatred by roasting them at the stake; or if reserved, it was to gratify their cupidity, by rendering them the objects of an abominable traffick. Alas! what heart that does not shrink with inward horror, at the contemplation of this ghastly scene! But its abominations were not yet complete.

About sixty of the wounded, many of them officers of distinction, or individuals of much respectability, had been suffered to take shelter in the houses of the inhabitants, and two of their own surgeons permitted by Proctor to attend them, from whom they also obtained a promise that a guard should be placed to protect them, and that they should be carried to Malden the next morning in sleds. But alas! this wretch's affected humanity, was but an aggravation of his cruelty, by awakening a hope which he intended to disappoint. No guard of soldiers was left, and on the next day, instead of sleds to convey them to a place of safety; a party of Indians returned to *the field of battle*, fell upon these poor wounded men,

plundered them of their clothing, and every article of any value which remained, tomahawked the greater part of them; and, to finish the scene, fired the houses, and consumed the dying and the dead.

The terrible tale is not yet told. Those rites, which in every civilized country are held sacred, which are not withheld from the vilest malefactor, which are paid alike to enemies and to friends, the rites of sepulture, although there existed an express stipulation with the monster who commanded, a stipulation unnecessary amongst civilized men, yet these were not only denied, but the humane inhabitants of the village dared not perform them under pain of death. And why was this refused? Because, said Proctor, his majesty's allies would not permit it! Was there any attempt made to bury them? None. Notwithstanding this, some of the inhabitants, although it "was as much as their lives were worth," did venture to perform this last and pious office to captain Hart, to captain Woolfolk, and a few others; but the remainder, nearly two hundred in number, never had this office performed for them, until their friends and relatives triumphed over the inhuman monster, the autumn following, and then gathered up their bleaching bones. Their mangled bodies had been suffered to lie on the ground exposed to the ferocious beasts of prey, or to the more horrible pollution of domestick animals.

The general tragedy was diversified by a hundred scenes of individual sufferings. The fate of the brave and accomplished captain Hart, a near relative of two of our most distinguished statesmen, (Henry Clay, and James Brown,) a young gentleman of finished education and polished manners, cannot be related without a tear. He had in a particular manner distinguished himself during the engagement, and had received a severe wound in the knee. On being surrendered with the other prisoners, he was recognized by colonel Elliot, a native of the United States, with whom he had been a class-mate at Princeton, but who had become a British officer and an ally to the savages. Base indeed must be that man, whose soul, under such circumstances, would not be touched. Elliot voluntarily offered his services to the

friend of his youth, his countryman, promised to take him under his special protection, and to transport him to Malden; but whether his heart, naturally vile, soon changed its purpose, or whether forbidden by Proctor, he gave himself no further concern on the subject. The next day a party of Indians came into the room where he lay, and tore him from his bed; he was then carried to another apartment by one of his brother officers, where he soon experienced the same treatment. He then, by the offer of a large sum of money, induced some Indians to take him to Malden; they had proceeded but a short distance, when they dragged him from his horse, shot him and scalped him. The same species of suffering was undergone by colonel Allen, by captains Hickman, Woolfolk, and M'Cracken. Many of the choicest sons of Kentucky had been of this ill-fated band; we may name Mr. Simpson, a member of congress, captains Bledsoe, Matson, Hamilton, Williams, and Kelly, and majors Madison and Ballard. With the exception of three companies of United States infantry under captains Hightower, Collier, and Sabrie, they were all the volunteers of that patriotick state. On the evening succeeding the engagement, rum was distributed to the Indians, for a frolick, in which they were disposed to indulge, and we may easily suppose what was the nature of their infernal orgies.

Proctor now beginning to fear the consequences of the infamy attached to his conduct, offered a price for those prisoners, whom the Indians still preserved; those prisoners who had surrendered on the faith of a capitulation with him, and whom he ought never to have abandoned. The humane inhabitants of Detroit, had already exhibited a degree of tenderness and solicitude for their unfortunate countrymen, which will ever entitle them to our gratitude and esteem. Many of them parted with every thing they possessed of value, for the purchase of the prisoners; for, to the disgrace of the British arms must it be recorded, persons of the first respectability, who composed this Spartan band, were suffered, under the eyes of colonel Proctor, to be hawked about the streets from door to door, and offered for sale like beasts! The only restraint on the cruelty of the savage wretches, arose from

permitting them to consult their avarice. Even such prisoners as were more fortunate, no matter what their rank or character, were treated with every species of contumely and contempt.

The conduct of the people at Detroit was such as might be expected from humane Americans. Every class of people eagerly sought opportunities of redeeming the unfortunate sufferers. The female sex, ever the foremost in acts of benevolence and in sympathy for the distressed, were particularly distinguished; they gladly gave their shawls, and even the blankets from their beds, when nothing else remained for them to give. Woodward, the former judge of the supreme court, and appointed by the president of the United States, a man of enlightened mind, now openly and boldly remonstrated with Proctor, and in the manly tone of his injured country depicted the infamy of the British conduct. "The truth," said he, "must undoubtedly eventually appear, and that unfortunate day must meet the steady and impartial eye of history." Those facts have been established by a cloud of witnesses, and the appeal of judge Woodward will reach posterity. Let the reader of this history, now remember, that this was but the commencement of a series of barbarities, both upon the Atlantick board, and upon the frontier, which was afterwards systematically pursued: that so far from this having been covered by the base excuse of retaliation, it is a charge which has never otherwise been met by Britain but with the silence of conscious guilt.

There can be nothing more delightful to a good man than the reflection that he lives in the heart of gratitude. What is all earthly pageantry, or power, or wealth, compared to the pleasure of a noble mind, in the contemplation of the bright store of its virtuous actions! Who would not be a M^cIntosh,* to experience wherever he

* Mr. M^cIntosh several times visited this country. The expression of gratitude from thousands whom he saved, was almost overwhelming. There are few scenes in the annals of history, or in the fictions of the poets, so sublimely affecting, as those which occurred when this good man visited Baltimore and New-Orleans. In these places particularly, the unfortunate people were received with open arms, and now live in comfort and respectability.

goes, the unfeigned, the full, the affecting homage of nature from the beings, whom at the risk of his life, and at the expense of his ample fortune, he saved from horrid massacres. The page shall brighten which contains the name of Augustus B. Woodward, "who," to use the expression of an American, who acknowledged him his benefactor, "was the life and soul of the Americans who remained; to whom they all looked up for succour in the hour of difficulty, for advice on every occasion." His zeal and industry were unwearied, and to his exertions many a family is indebted for the restoration of the tenderest relative, a father, a son, or a brother.

The indignation of the American officers was, on one occasion, nobly expressed. When at fort George, all except general Winchester and some others, were permitted to return home on their parole; when the paper was presented for signature, they demanded to know *who were his majesty's allies?* Insolence and guilt were staggered at the question. Ashamed to own their savage allies, they replied, *his majesty's allies are known.* Truly they were known, they were known like the blood-hounds of Pizarro; they were known to the disgrace of their employers.

Never did any calamity so deeply affect the sensibilities of a people. All Kentucky *was literally in mourning*; for the soldiers thus massacred, tortured, burnt, or denied the common rites of sepulture, were of the most respectable families of the state; many of them young men of fortune and property, with numerous friends and relatives.

It would be unjust, in this common anathema, to include all the British officers; the names of some deserve to be rescued from this indelible reproach; major Muir, captains Aikins, Curtis, Dr. Bowen, and the reverend Mr. Parrow. Elliot was also spoken of in favourable terms by the American officers, as having on some occasions interested himself for the sufferers. Enough has certainly been said on this distressing subject; one part, however, cannot be omitted. Proctor, perceiving the eagerness of the people of Detroit in purchasing the unhappy captives, actually issued an order prohibiting any further purcha-

ses, on the ground that they gave more than the government. This officer was afterwards promoted to the rank of a brigadier, in consequence of his good conduct, particularly in saving the prisoners from the fury of the Indians. If any thing can move indignation, it is this climax of insult. It is thus that Great Britain wilfully shuts her eyes. The facts were afterwards proved to the satisfaction of every man, and the British government was silent; but had not the magnanimity to consign the guilty wretch to punishment.

The incidents of this catastrophe might be swelled to a volume. A few days after the affair, a doctor M'Keehan was despatched by general Harrison for the purpose of attending the sick, and with gold to provide such things as they might want. The doctor, notwithstanding his flag, his sacred errand, and an open letter directed to any British officer, stating the object of his mission, was actually wounded and robbed, then dragged to Malden, whence he was taken to Quebec. After the sufferings of several months, dragged from place to place, from dungeon to dungeon, sufferings which could hardly occur on the banks of the Niger, he at length reached home, with a constitution totally impaired. Such are the distressing occurrences which it becomes the painful duty of the historian to record. The heart sickens at the contemplation of so much depravity. Why are so much pains taken to make us hate the name of Englishman? This is far from being the wish of Americans. Such conduct is not to be accounted for, unless it proceeds from a deeply rooted hatred on the part of the British government. We know that pains have been taken to cherish in the minds of the people of England, a contempt for our national character; we know that hired calumniators have represented us as a savage race, to whom the courtesies of civilized life cannot be extended, because they cannot be reciprocal. These things must have an end, or a day of terrible retribution will come at last.

The news of this melancholy affair soon after reached general Harrison, who was on his march with reinforcements to general Winchester. He had heard with chagrin the movements of that officer, and apprehensive of

the consequence, had ordered a detachment of three hundred men, under major Cotgreves, from general Perkins' brigade of Ohio militia, to march to his relief. Hearing of the disaster, they fell back upon the Rapids, where general Harrison was then stationed, who retreated to Carrying river, for the purpose of forming a junction with the troops in the rear, and favouring the convoy of artillery and stores then coming from Upper Sandusky. He first, however, despatched a chosen body of one hundred and seventy men for the purpose of picking up such of the unfortunate fugitives as might have escaped. The number of these was very small, on account of the depth of the snow, which rendered it almost impossible for them to make their way. Governour Meigs having promptly despatched two regiments to the assistance of Harrison, who again advanced to the Rapids, and immediately set about constructing a fort, which in honour of the governor of Ohio, he named fort Meigs. Fortifications were at the same time constructed at Upper Sandusky by general Cooks; who commanded the Pennsylvania militia. Excepting some parties on excursions, nothing additional transpired during the severe winter months. The movement of general Winchester had considerably deranged the plans of Harrison; and it was necessary to organize a new system. He returned to Ohio, for the purpose of obtaining an additional force from that state, and Kentucky. Towards the beginning of April, he received information which hastened his return to fort Meigs.

The enemy for some time past, had been collecting in considerable numbers, for the purpose of laying siege to this place; and as the new levies had not arrived, the Pennsylvania brigade, although its term of service had expired, generously volunteered for the defence of the fort. Immediately on his arrival, general Harrison set about making preparations for the approaching siege.—The fort was situated upon a rising ground, at the distance of a few hundred yards from the river, the country on each side of which is chiefly natural meadows. The garrison was well supplied with the means of defence, and Harrison, with unremitting exertions, laboured night and day, to improve its capacity for resisting the siege.

The assistance of captains Wood and Gratiot, his principal engineers, enabled him to put in practice whatever was necessary to improve his fortifications. The troops in the fort, to the number of twelve hundred, the greater part volunteers, were in high spirits, and determined to defend themselves to the utmost. On the twenty-eighth, one of the parties constantly kept out for the purpose of noting the advance of the enemy, reported that he was in great force about three miles below. A few British and Indians showed themselves on the opposite side; but a few shot from an eighteen pounder, compelled them to retire. A despatch was now sent to hasten the march of general Clay, who was approaching with twelve hundred militia from Kentucky. These brave people, so much sufferers during the war, were ever the foremost to meet danger, and the first to fly to the relief of their friends. On the three following days, the enemy was occupied in selecting the best positions on either side of the river, around the fort, whence it might be annoyed, and in erecting batteries, on the opposite side; in the latter, they were considerably impeded by the fire from fort Meigs; but they usually availed themselves of the night, to proceed in the work. A fire of small arms had been kept up by them, which was returned by the American artillery, but without any loss of importance on either side.

The garrison suffered somewhat from want of water, their well not being completed; and it was attended with great risk to obtain their supply during the night from the river. The perpetual vigilance necessary to be observed, to guard against a surprise, by lying constantly on their arms was calculated to wear them down. On the first of May, the enemy had succeeded in mounting his batteries, and opened a fire with one twenty-four pounder, one twelve, one six, and one howitzer. No material injury was done on either side: the commander-in-chief made a narrow escape, a ball having struck a bench on which he was sitting; and some days before, a man was mortally wounded by his side. On the third, an additional battery was opened, at the distance of two hundred and fifty yards from the fort, mounted with a

mortar, and a number of bombs were thrown; but this was several times silenced. In this part of the siege, major Chambers approached the fort with a flag, and for the first time summoned the place to surrender. He stated, that the British commander *was desirous of sparing the effusion of human blood*, that his force was so immense that it would be impossible to withstand it; and that, unless the Americans threw themselves at once upon the tender mercy of Proctor, they might expect to be massacred in cold blood. This summons was received by Harrison, with the contempt and indignation it merited. To look for mercy from the hands of Proctor, yet reeking from the murder of the Kentuckians, at the river Raisin, would have been imbecility indeed; and if he had not been able to restrain the Indians then, how could he now; when, according to his own account, the number of Indians collected, was greater than had ever been known. The commander expressed his surprise, that the garrison had not been summoned before; this at least implied they thought him resolved to do his duty: and that as to the number of his force, which he represented as of such unusual magnitude, it was a trick which he perfectly understood. He then requested major Chambers to return for answer to general Proctor, that while he had the honour to command an American fort, it should never surrender to a combined force of British and Indians.

The siege was renewed with great vigour; and the firing was hotly kept up on both sides. The Indians mounted on trees at some distance from the fort, fired into it, and killed and wounded several. On the fifth, a small party from the advancing corps under general Clay, reached the fort with the information, that he was in his boats not many miles above. Orders were instantly despatched by the commander-in-chief to the general, requiring him to detach eight hundred men for the purpose of landing on the opposite side, and destroying the enemy's batteries; and in the meanwhile he projected a sortie against those on the side of the fort, under the command of lieutenant colonel Miller, of the nineteenth United States infantry. This simultaneous attack was well planned; should it succeed, the enemy would be in-

stantly compelled to raise the siege. Colonel Dudley, who was charged with the execution of the order by general Clay, landed his men in good order, and then advanced on the enemy's cannon. The four batteries were carried in an instant, and the British regulars and Indians compelled to take to flight. A large body of Indians, under the celebrated Tecumseh, was on their march to the British camp, when they met the fugitives; this body was instantly ordered to form an ambush; and wait the approach of the Americans: and, to decoy them, a few Indians shewed themselves out of the woods, as if to renew the action. Colonel Dudley having executed his orders, commanded a retreat; but his men, flushed with victory, and roused with the desire of revenging their slaughtered countrymen, pushed forward with irresistible impetuosity. Their commander in vain attempted to check their career; he even turned his esponton against them; but nothing could restrain them. In a few moments, they found themselves surrounded by three times their number. A desperate fight now ensued, which was followed by a slaughter of the Kentuckians, almost as terrible as the river Raisin, though not to the same extent after the battle. The chief who now commanded, was of a much more generous character than Round-head or Proctor; and even on the field of battle personally interposed to save those who yielded. But one hundred and fifty made their escape; the rest were either killed or missing. Colonel Dudley attempted to cut his way through to the river; but was killed, having himself slain an Indian after he was mortally wounded. The other party, under general Clay, landed upon the side of the fort, and was near being drawn in like manner into an ambush, when general Harrison ordered a troop of horse to sally out and cover their retreat.

The impetuosity of colonel Dudley's party, in some measure, disconcerted the plan of the sortie under colonel Miller. Notwithstanding this, he sallied forth at the head of three hundred men, assaulted the whole line of their works, manned by three hundred and fifty regulars and five hundred Indians, and after several brilliant charges, drove the enemy from their principal batteries.

spiked the cannon, and returned to the fort with forty-two prisoners. The first charge was made on the Canadians and Indians by major Alexander's battalion; the second by colonel Miller, against the regulars; the officers of these, were Croghan, Langham, Bradford, a gallant officer, Nearing, and lieutenant Campbell, and a company of Kentuckians, commanded by captain Sabrie, who had distinguished himself in the battle of Frenchtown: this company was particularly remarked; it maintained its ground with unshaken firmness, at one time, against four times their numbers; they were entirely surrounded, and would have been cut off, had not lieutenant Gwynne, of the nineteenth, charged the enemy, and released them.

A cessation of hostilities took place during the three following days; flags frequently passed between the besiegers and the besieged, and arrangements were entered into for the exchange of prisoners. Tecumseh agreed to release his claim to the persons taken by the Indians, provided some Wyandots, to the number of forty, were delivered up; and Proctor promised to furnish a list of the killed, wounded and prisoners; with this, however, he never complied. On the ninth, the enemy appeared to be engaged in making preparations for raising the siege; a schooner, and some gun-boats had been brought up during the night, for the purpose of embarking their artillery; a few shot from the fort compelled them to relinquish this design, and at ten o'clock, they raised the siege, and moved off with their whole force.

Thus terminated a siege of thirteen days, in which our enemies were taught, that in future they must expect to meet with resistance different from that which they had experienced from Hull; and that, if they should succeed in taking an American garrison, it must be after severe fighting. The loss of the Americans in the fort, was eighty-one killed, and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded. The loss of the Kentuckians, as usual, was much the most severe, having upwards of seventy killed and wounded, besides the loss under colonel Budley. This officer was much regretted; few men in Kentucky were more generally esteemed; his body, after much search was found unburied, and horribly man-

gled. He was interred, together with some of his companions, with the honours of war.

The force under general Proctor was reported at five hundred and fifty regulars, eight hundred militia, and at least fifteen hundred Indians, who fought with great courage, and, on several occasions, rescued their allies in the sorties from the garrison. On the day of the last affair, Tecumseh arrived in person, with the largest body of Indians that had ever been collected on the northern frontier; and had not the sortie taken place, it is probable the situation of the army would have been extremely critical. The Indians, after the battle, according to the custom which prevails amongst them, had returned to their villages in spite of the exertions of Tecumseh, and his subordinate chiefs. Thus weakened, Proctor was obliged precipitately to retreat, leaving behind many valuable articles, which in his haste he was unable to carry away. Besides the American officers already named, there were many others who distinguished themselves; major Ball, an active officer, who was frequently complimented in general orders, rendered great service during the siege; captain Croghan, on one occasion made a brilliant sortie on the British regulars; majors Todd, Johnson, Sedwick, Ritzen, and Stoddard, were mentioned in the most honourable terms; the latter a man of distinguished literary attainment; he received a severe wound of which he afterwards died. Captain Butler's Pittsburgh Blues, which behaved so handsomely at the battle of Mississinewa, composed chiefly of young gentlemen of Pittsburg, suffered severely; the accomplished young officer who commanded them, was a son of the lamented general Butler, who fell in St. Clair's defeat. It would be in vain, on this occasion, to enumerate all who deserved the applauses of their country.

After the siege of fort Meigs, offensive operations were for a considerable time suspended on either side. Until the completion of the naval preparations on lake Erie, which were then in considerable forwardness, the troops were to remain at fort Meigs, and Upper Sandusky. Without the command of the lake, little of consequence could be effected; the troops would, therefore,

continue a great part of the summer in a state of inactivity, awaiting this event. In the meantime general Harrison returned to Franklinton, for the purpose of organizing the forces expected to concentrate at that place. A deputation from all the Indian tribes residing in the state of Ohio, and some in the territories of Indiana and Illinois, made a tender of their services to follow general Harrison into Canada. Hitherto, with the exception of a small band commanded by Logan, a distinguished chief and nephew of Tecumseh, none of the friendly Indians had been employed by the United States. The advice to remain neutral, could not be understood by them; they considered it in some measure a reproach upon their courage, more particularly, as several hostile incursions had been made of late into their settlements by the hostile Indians. General Harrison consented to receive them into the service; but expressly on condition, that they should spare their prisoners and not assail defenceless women and children.

Although the settled parts of the country were shielded from the depredations of the Indians, they still continued to attack the settlements along the borders of the lake, from Frenchtown to Erie. These inroads received a temporary check, from a squadron of horse under major Ball. This officer was descending the Sandusky with twenty-two men, when he was fired upon, by about the same number of Indians in ambuscade. He charged upon them, drove them from their hiding places, and after an obstinate contest on the plain, favourable for the operations of cavalry, he first killed their chiefs; the savages seeing no hopes of escape contended with dreadful fury until the whole band was destroyed. During the heat of the fight the major was dismounted, and had a personal conflict with a chief of prodigious strength, and they fought with desperation, until an officer shot the Indian.

We now return to the operations of our armies on the northern frontiers, events of a very important character having transpired in that quarter, since the winter, by which hostilities had been suspended.

CHAPTER VII.

British preparations in Canada—Incursion of Forsythe—Attack on Ogdensburg—The taking of York and death of Pike—Taking of fort George—Battle of Stoney Creek, and capture of generals Chandler and Winder—General Brown defends Sackett's Harbour—Resignation of general Dearborn—The town of Sodus attacked—Battle of the Beaver Dams—Second taking of York—British devastate the borders of lake Champlain—Cruise of commodore Chauncey.

DURING the winter, Great Britain had sent a number of troops to Halifax, for the purpose of being employed, in the spring, in the defence of Canada. The recent success of the allies on the continent, had taken away any disposition she might have had for a peace, as was clearly proved by the rejection of the Russian mediation. The militia of Canada was disciplined with great care, and from the greater energy of the British government, it was enabled to bring them more promptly into service, and to retain them for a longer term; whereas, during the past year, from the war being unpopular, it was difficult to prevail on the state authorities to call out the militia; and volunteers, by which the war to the westward was so spiritedly carried on, came forward, in the northern section of the union, in but small numbers. It was still hoped that such preparations would be made, during the winter, as would lead to something of more importance than had been done the year before, although the golden moment for the conquest of Canada had passed, the British having so strengthened themselves, as to render the execution of such a project, a matter of extreme difficulty. It was thought, however, that by one more vigorous effort, particularly if the spirit of the northern states could be roused, and the nation be made to move forth in its strength, something yet might be effected. If a complete command could be obtained on the lakes, the whole of Upper Canada, at least, must fall before winter.

A mutual exchange of prisoners had taken place, and arrangements were entered into, to effect this in future;

by which means some valuable officers, taken in the first campaign, were restored. The troops, enlisted in the midland and northern states, were marched to the frontier, and all the necessary supplies and munitions of war were assiduously collected at the different posts along the line. Excepting some partizan affairs, nothing of consequence transpired during the winter.

In the month of February; a party of the enemy, who crossed, in search of some of their deserters, committed many wanton depredations on the houses and property of the inhabitants. Major Forsythe, who commanded at Ogdensburgh, resolved to return the visit. Taking a part of his riflemen, and such volunteers as offered, some of whom were private gentlemen of the neighbourhood, he crossed the St. Lawrence, surprised the guard at Elizabethtown, took fifty-two prisoners, among whom were one major, three captains, and two lieutenants; and captured one hundred and twenty muskets, twenty rifles, two casks of fixed ammunition, and other publick property. He then returned, without the loss of a single man.

Soon after, it was discovered that the British meditated an attack on Ogdensburgh. Colonel Benedict called out his militia, to aid in the defence of the place. The British appeared on the twenty-first of February, with twelve hundred men. This force, so much superior to that of Forsythe, succeeded in expelling him from the town, but not without a sharp conflict. The British attacked in two columns, of six hundred men each, at eight o'clock in the morning, and were commanded by captain M'Donnel, of the Glengary light infantry, a corps trained with peculiar care, and colonel Frazer of the Canada militia. The Americans kept up the contest for an hour, with the loss of twenty men killed and wounded; and from the cool and deliberate aim of the riflemen, the enemy must have lost twice that number, among whom were five officers of distinction. A flourish was made by the British of this affair, which, judging by what it cost them, they regarded as a great victory; and in consequence, a message was sent with the news to colonel M'Feely, commanding the American garrison of Niagara, informing

him that a salute would be fired from fort George. The American officer expressed his satisfaction at being able to return the compliment, as he had just received intelligence of the capture of his majesty's frigate Java, by an American frigate of equal force; and intended to fire a salute from Niagara, at the same time, in honour of this brilliant victory.

Bodies of new levies were daily arriving at Sackett's Harbour, and the vicinity of that place. To convert new recruits, in the course of a few months, into efficient troops, was not an operation easily performed. Indefatigable industry was displayed, in this essential duty, by Pike, lately promoted to the rank of a brigadier, in consequence of his meritorious services, and increasing reputation. Pike was almost cradled in the camp; his father a revolutionary officer, was still in the army but too far advanced in life for active service. He was acquainted with all the details of the military profession, having served in every grade from a soldier to the general. He possessed an ardent mind, and was highly animated by a desire of martial glory and renown. Pike was already a favourite in the United States, and distinguished as one of the adventurous explorers of the immense western desert. He had here given proofs of much fortitude of mind, vigour of body, and great prudence and intelligence. His zeal and activity were afterwards conspicuous, in the success with which he formed the regiment placed under his command. He was beloved by his troops, whom he knew how to engage, and into whom he could infuse a portion of his own generous spirit. It is not surprising, therefore, that the progress made by the troops at Sackett's Harbour, under the unceasing attention of this accomplished officer, should be unusually rapid. Nothing was wanting but an opportunity, on the opening of the campaign, to lead them to the achievement of some glorious exploit.

This opportunity was not long in presenting itself. The lake was no sooner clear of ice, than a descent on the Canada shore was projected. York, the capital of Upper Canada, was the depot of all the British military stores, whence the western posts were supplied. It was

known that a large vessel was on the stocks, and nearly completed. The importance of the place to either party was immense; and should an attack on it prove successful, it might be followed up by an immediate attack upon fort George; the forces then concentrating, and aided by the fleet, might, with every prospect of success move against Kingston.

About the middle of April, the commander-in-chief, in conference with Pike and other officers, determined on attacking York. Major Forsythe, who had returned to Ogdensburg on the retreat of the British, was ordered with his riflemen to repair to Sackett's Harbour; and commodore Chauncey received orders from the navy department, to co-operate with general Dearborn, in any plan of operations which he might wish to carry into execution. On the twenty-fifth of April, the fleet moved down the lake, every arrangement having been made for the projected attack. The plan, which had been principally suggested by Pike, was highly judicious, and at his particular request, the commander-in-chief intrusted him with its execution. On the twenty-seventh, at two o'clock, the fleet safely reached the place of debarkation. This commenced at eight o'clock; and was completed at ten. The spot fixed on for this purpose was an open space at the ruins of Toronto, the former site of the fort, about two miles above the present town of York. The British, on discovering the fleet, hastily made the necessary dispositions to oppose the landing of the American forces. General Sheaffe advanced from the garrison, which was situated above York, with his whole force, consisting of about seven hundred and fifty regulars and militia, and five hundred Indians, besides a body of grenadiers, and a corps of Glengary fencibles. The Indians were placed in the thickets at the water's edge, near the expected points of debarkation, while the regulars were drawn up on the bank, and partly concealed in a wood. In pursuance of the plan of attack, the batteaux carrying Forsythe and his riflemen, first moved to the shore; this appeared to be at the point where the principal force of the enemy was stationed. A galling fire of musketry and rifles was instantly opened on him. To have gone higher

up would have deranged the general plan; he determined to dash at once into the thickest of the enemy; but first ordered the oars to cease a moment, that he might give his riflemen an opportunity of returning the fire.

Pike, who was attentively watching this movement, observed the pause, and not knowing its reason, instantly leaped into the boat provided for himself and his staff, at the same time ordering major King to follow, with a part of his regiment. Before he reached the shore, however, Forsythe had landed, and was closely engaged with the whole British force. The detachment under King, consisting of the light artillery under major Eustice, a volunteer corps commanded by colonel M'Clure, and about thirty riflemen under lieutenant Riddle, now landed; and Pike, placing himself at the head of those first forred, ordered the rest to follow rapidly; then gallantly ascended the bank with his handful of men, under a shower of bullets from the grenadiers. He charged impetuously upon them; they were thrown into disorder and fled. This had scarcely been achieved, when the bugles of Forsythe announced that he had also been victorious; the Glengary fencibles still kept up an irregular fire, but the Indians had fled. A fresh body of grenadiers now suddenly issued from the wood, and made a desperate charge on major King's regiment, which by this time was drawn up on the bank; at first it faltered; but in a moment was rallied, returned to the charge, and drove the enemy from the field. The British were again seen forming at a distance; but considerable reinforcements having by this time landed from the fleet, and formed in column, the British retreated to the garrison below.

The whole of the troops having now arrived, they were formed in the order contemplated in the plan of attack. The different bodies of troops under majors Lewis and Eustice, and colonels M'Clure and Ripley, were disposed in the most judicious manner, while Forsythe and his riflemen were to act on the flanks. The column then moved forward with the utmost precision, and with as much regularity as the nature of the ground would permit, until they emerged from the wood, when a twenty-four pounder opened upon them from one of the enemy's

batteries. The battery was soon cleared, and the column moved on to the second, which was abandoned on the approach of the Americans, the enemy retreating to the garrison. General Pike here ordered the column to halt, for the purpose of learning the strength of the garrison, and obtaining further information; as the barracks appeared to have been evacuated, he suspected a stratagem, to draw him within the reach of some secret force. Lieutenant Riddle was sent forward to learn the situation of the enemy. In the meanwhile, the heroick Pike, as humane as he was brave, occupied himself in removing a wounded British soldier from a dangerous situation, and after having performed this act of humanity, which speaks volumes in his favour, he was calmly seated on the stump of a tree, in conversation with a sergeant, who had been taken prisoner, when suddenly the air was convulsed by a tremendous explosion. The magazine, at the distance of two hundred yards, near the barracks had blown up. The air was instantly filled with huge stones and fragments of wood, rent asunder and whirled aloft by the exploding of five hundred barrels of powder. This was the treacherous attack which the British had prepared, but which Pike could not have suspected. Immense quantities of these inflamed and blackened masses fell in the midst of the victorious column, causing a frightful havock, which the arms of their enemies could not effect, killing and wounding upwards of two hundred, and amongst them their beloved commander, the heroick Pike. The brave troops, though for a moment confounded by the shock, were soon called to their recollection by the national musick, Yankee Doodle. The column was instantly closed up, and they rent the air, in their turn, with three loud huzzas!

The wound of Pike, a severe contusion, was soon found to be mortal; he still, however, preserved his undaunted spirit; "move on my brave fellows, and revenge your general," he cried, addressing them for the last time. They instantly obeyed. He was then taken up by some of his men, to be conveyed on board the ship; scarcely had he reached the shore of the lake, when a loud and victorious shout from his brigade brightened, for a mo-

ment, the expiring lamp of life; a faint sigh was all his strength would permit him to express. Shortly after his being carried on board the *Pert*, the British flag was brought to him; at sight of it, his eyes again resumed its lustre for a moment, and making signs for it to be placed under his head, he gloriously expired. Thus fell, a warrior who will live with honour in the page of history. Brave, prudent, and chivalrous, he was adorned with that moral excellence which is essential to the accomplished soldier and the real hero. Thus falling in the very day-spring of life, we can but feebly anticipate what the ripened age of so much promise would bring forth. He was amiable in all the domestick relations of life, strictly observant of the duties of morality and religion; he was a sincere patriot, whose chief ambition was to give distinction to his country. With him the Scipios of antiquity were no fables; and the fate, as well as character of Montgomery, whose name he bore, were truly his own. No officer ever entertained a more refined and perfect sense of honourable warfare; as a proof of it, are the orders which he gave this memorable day, that any of his soldiers, who should molest the possessions or persons of the inhabitants, or wantonly destroy the publick property, should suffer instant death. It is difficult to say whether such men are actuated by the prevailing sentiments of their country, or whether they give an original tone to its manners and habits of thinking: certain it is, that both in our army and navy, a species of refined honour and generosity has uniformly manifested itself, in striking contrast with the conduct of our enemy, who has elsewhere exhibited the noblest traits, but who seems to consider this new world, too contemptible a theatre on which to appear with any dignity of character.

On the fall of general Pike, the command devolved on colonel Pearce, who advanced to the barracks, which he found already in the possession of Forsythe; the enemy having retreated to the fort. There being now no person acquainted with the plan of the invasion but the commander-in-chief, the enemy was not immediately pursued; otherwise the whole of the regulars and publick stores, must have fallen into our hands. The Americans,

after halting a short time, moved on towards the town; and drawing near it were met by officers of the Canada militia, with offers of capitulation. This produced some delay; but it being suspected that it was only intended to facilitate the escape of general Sheaffe and the principal part of his regulars, and to gain time while they could destroy the military stores, and burn the vessel on the stocks, Forsythe and Ripley pushed forward, and were soon after followed by Pearce. The strictest observance of Pike's order, with respect to the treatment of the inhabitants and their property, was enjoined. At four o'clock the Americans were masters of the town. Although with just right they might be enraged at the conduct of the British, as well for their barbarous and unmanly attempt to destroy them by a mine, as their amusing them under the pretence of discussing the stipulations of surrender, the troops conducted themselves with the most perfect order and forbearance; perhaps considering this the best testimonial of respect for their brave leader. The stipulations of surrender were entered into with colonel Pearce, at the very moment the British were engaged in the destruction of the publick property. By the terms of the stipulation, the troops, regulars and militia, naval officers and seamen, were surrendered prisoners of war; all the publick stores were given up, and all private property was to be guaranteed to the citizens of York; every thing relating to the civil departments should be respected; and the surgeons, attending on the wounded, should not be considered as prisoners of war.

On entering the house appropriated for the sittings of the legislature, a discovery was made, which cannot be spoken of without feelings of indignation. Among the regal trophies, a human scalp was found over the mace, near the speaker's chair! Other nations have endeavoured to civilize the Indians, by inducing them to imitate the manners of the Europeans; the officers of the British government alone have taken pains to pamper their savage propensities, not merely by indulgence, but by adopting their horrid customs. A human scalp hung up as a trophy, in the legislative hall of a civilized

and christian people! Can we now wonder at the brutality with which the war was conducted towards us? Had the eloquent and virtuous Chatham lived to have seen this day, what must he have thought of the degradation of his countrymen! Would he not have renounced the name of Briton, thus scandalized, by all that is profane and indecent? Would he not think his country sunk below the level of civilized nations, in so far setting at naught the precepts of religion and humanity, as to mingle with her regal trophies, the detestable symbol of cruelty, which disgraces even the savage? Can these things be countenanced by the enlightened Englishmen, whose fame, whose writings, receive a second life in this country; or will he disbelieve that his countrymen can be guilty of such atrocities? For we, who have seen and felt them, could not otherwise have believed that a people, who display so many virtues both in peace and war, should thus forget what belongs to the character of christian men. It seems then, whatever their conduct may be on the other side of the Atlantic; that in this new world, and to this youthful nation, they would say, by the horrid symbol of the scalp, that they have renounced all that is respectable among civilized men, while we are endeavouring to emulate the actions of those illustrious Englishmen, whose fame their degenerate sons have disgraced.

Notwithstanding the ample cause of rage, in the discovery of this additional proof of the disposition of their enemies, the soldiery was perfectly restrained from committing any acts of violence; they marched to the barracks the same evening, with the exception of the riflemen, who remained in town. No part of the house in which the detested scalp was found, underwent any injury from them; nothing was carried away except the odious trophy and the speaker's mace. So far from inflicting any injury on the inhabitants, a considerable portion of the public stores, which could not easily be transported, were distributed among them, and they expressed themselves highly satisfied with the conduct of the Americans. The principal civil officers of the place addressed a letter of thanks to general Dearborn, for the strict regard which was manifested by the troops under his command, for the safety of the persons and property of the inhabitants.

The commander-in-chief landed soon after the fall of Pike, but did not assume the immediate command until after the surrender of the town.

Great assistance was rendered during the engagement by the co-operation of commodore Chauncey, after landing the troops. The vessels, in consequence of a contrary wind, were compelled to beat up to their several positions with great difficulty, and under a heavy fire from the batteries. When this was effected, they opened a galling and destructive fire, which contributed much to the success of the attack. In the squadron, three were killed and eleven wounded; among the first midshipmen Thompson and Hatfield, both much regretted.

The loss on the American side was inconsiderable until the explosion of the infernal machine, which caused it to amount to three hundred in killed and wounded. Several officers of merit were killed or wounded by the explosion. The aids of the general, captains Nicholson and Frazier, were wounded; the first proved instantly mortal: also, captain Lyon, captain Hoppock, lieutenant Bloomfield, and many other valuable officers. Much praise was bestowed on lieutenant colonel Mitchell, of the third regiment of artillery, who formed the column after the explosion, and throughout the whole of the affair particularly distinguished himself. Major Eustice, captains Scott, Young, Walworth, McGlassin, and Stephen H. Moore, of the Baltimore volunteers, who lost a leg by the explosion; lieutenants Irvine, Fanning and Riddle, were named among the most distinguished of the day.

There were taken from the British, one lieutenant-colonel, one major, thirteen captains, nine lieutenants, eleven ensigns, one deputy-adjutant-general, and four naval officers, and two hundred and fifty-one non-commissioned officers and privates. But it was contended, that, according to the capitulation, the commanding general, his staff, and all his regulars, ought to have been surrendered. There was certainly an unfair procedure on the part of the British general, as well in this business, as in the destruction of the publick property, after it had been fairly surrendered. With respect to the explosion,

it was attributed by general Sheaffe to accident; and as a proof, he mentioned the circumstance of forty of his own men having been killed and wounded on the retreat. But the American officers, who witnessed the affair, were perfectly satisfied that it was designed. After the conflict had entirely ceased for some time, and the magazine and barracks entirely abandoned by the enemy, the American column at rest within three hundred yards, the occurrence of such an accident is almost impossible, and leads to a conviction, that a match had been purposely laid, intended to explode on the approach of the American column; which, but for the fortunate precaution of their commander, would have involved them in one general destruction. In further proof, we may adduce the fact, of an immense number of stones and a quantity of old iron, evidently collected for the express purpose of causing greater havock. It is certainly unjust, on light grounds, to impute to the British general, acts so dishonourable; and but for this last circumstance it might be regarded as the unauthorised act of some base individual. The circumstance of a part of his own column having been overtaken by the stones propelled to an immense distance, has no weight in his exculpation: this may have proceeded from not having calculated with sufficient accuracy for their own safety, although nothing could have been better timed for the complete destruction of our gallant countrymen. Had the explosion taken place in the midst of the fight, there might then be room for supposition that it was the result of accident; but, under the circumstances, that this should have been the case, appears next to impossible. The loss of the British, amounted to seven hundred and fifty men in killed, wounded and prisoners; of these the killed and wounded were not short of two hundred; the prisoners amounted to fifty regulars, and five hundred militia. Property to an immense amount was destroyed, and there still remained to the value of at least half a million of dollars: in his hasty retreat, general Sheaffe abandoned his baggage, containing all his books and papers, which proved a valuable acquisition. Upon the whole, the capture of York was a brilliant achievement, and worthy of Pike, its projector.

considerable swell, the troops from the Madison and Oneida, could not reach shore until the second and third brigades had advanced; M'Comb's regiment, and the marines under captain Smith, therefore, did not reach shore until the debarkation had been completed.

The advance under Scott, consisting of five hundred men, on its approach to the shore, had been exposed to an incessant volley of musketry, from at least twelve hundred regulars, stationed in a ravine. This spirited corps, composed of the flower of the army, moved on without faltering, and for a few minutes returning the fire. As they drew near the shore, a surprising degree of emulation manifested itself both amongst officers and soldiers; many of them leaping into the lake, and wading to land. Captain Hindman, an accomplished young officer of the second artillery, was the first on the enemy's territory. No sooner were the troops formed on the beach, than they were led to the charge, and instantly dispersed the enemy in every direction, some flying to the woods for shelter, and others seeking refuge in the fort. The first were briskly assailed by Forsythe, while the advanced corps and the first brigade, under general Boyd, vigorously attacked the latter. The prevailing panick had seized the garrison, which made but a feeble resistance. Fort Niagara, and the batteries on the American side, opened at the same time; and fort George, now being untenable, the British laid trains to their magazines, and retreated with precipitation, having abandoned all the works, and pursuing different routs. Colonel Scott and his light troops were closely in their rear, when he was recalled by general Boyd. Lieutenant Riddle, with his party, not receiving the order, followed the enemy almost to Queens-town, and picked up a number of stragglers. The light troops took possession of fort George; captains Hindman and Stockton entering first, and extinguishing the fire intended to explode the magazine; the former withdrew a match at the imminent hazard of his life. General Boyd and colonel Scott mounted the parapet for the purpose of cutting away the staff; but Hindman succeeded in taking the flag, which he forwarded to general Dearborn, and which was immediately replaced by the American

ensign, while the troops were ordered in and quartered. At twelve o'clock the whole of the British fortifications on this shore were in possession of the Americans.—The enemy had moved off with such rapidity, that in a short time nothing more of them was to be seen; and our troops, having been eleven hours under arms, were too much fatigued to pursue them far. The loss of the British in this affair, considering the time which the contest lasted, was very considerable. They had one hundred and eight killed, and one hundred and sixty wounded, who fell into our hands; they besides lost one hundred and fifteen regulars, and five hundred militia, prisoners. The loss of the Americans was thirty-nine killed, and one hundred and eight wounded; among the former, lieutenant Hobart of the light artillery; and of the latter, major King of the thirteenth, captains Arrowsworth of the sixth, Steel of the sixteenth, Roach of the twenty-third, (who had been wounded the year before at the heights of Queenstown, and was promoted to the rank of captain for his good conduct on that occasion,) and lieutenant Swearingen of the rifle corps. The forty-ninth, the British invincibles, was in this affair, and its commander, colonel Myers, wounded and taken prisoner. The action, notwithstanding, was fought on the American side with inferior numbers, the advance and part of Boyd's brigade only having been actually engaged. Shortly after the surrender of the fort, the lake became so rough as to render the situation of the fleet somewhat dangerous. Commodore Chauncey, therefore, made signal to weigh; and accordingly stood up the river, choosing a place of safety between the two forts, he there anchored.

High praise was given both by the commodore and general Dearborn, to the forces under their respective commands. Scott and Boyd were particularly mentioned; the commander-in-chief also acknowledged himself much indebted to colonel M. Porter, of the light artillery, and to major Armistead, of the third regiment artillery, and to captain Totten of the engineers, for their skill in demolishing the enemy's forts and batteries. We here find the first mention of the hero of lake Erie, lieutenant commandant Oliver H. Perry, who had volunteered his ser-

vices on the night of the twenty-sixth, and had rendered great services in assisting in the arrangement and debarkation of the troops. Much of the success of the enterprise was owing to the judicious plan of commodore Chauncey, in attacking the different batteries of the enemy with his vessels, and rendering them untenable. General Dearborn had been much indisposed; he continued to command regularly, issuing his orders from his bed. Lieutenant Perry was despatched the day after to Black Rock, with fifty men, for the purpose of taking five vessels to Erie as soon as possible, to aid in forming the squadron preparing at that place, and which it was expected would be ready by the fifteenth of June, to commence operations in conjunction with Harrison.

A few days afterwards, it was ascertained that the enemy under general Vincent had retired to the Beaver Dams, where he formed a junction with the command of lieutenant colonel Bishop from fort Erie and Chippewa. The day after this was effected, the British general retreated hastily to the upper end of lake Ontario, and took a position on the heights at the head of Burlington Bay, his force it was supposed did not exceed a thousand men. General Winder, at his request, was detached by the commander-in-chief, in pursuit, with his brigade. Having reached Twenty Mile Creek, on the second day's march, the general received information, that the enemy had been reinforced by several hundred men from Kingston; that his force, besides Indians, and a few militia, might amount to fifteen hundred men: the general, in consequence, thought it prudent to despatch an officer to general Dearborn for an additional force, that under his command not exceeding twelve hundred infantry, exclusive of the dragoons under colonel Burns, and Towson's artillery. He nevertheless continued his march to Forty Mile Creek, where selecting a good position, he proposed to wait the arrival of the expected reinforcement. This, consisting of Chandler's brigade, in a short time arrived, after a rapid march, and general Chandler being the senior officer, assumed the command.

On the same day, the united force proceeded to a rivulet called Stoney Creek, where they encamped, having in

the course of the afternoon skirmished with the advance parties of the enemy, which were driven in. In order to secure the baggage of the army, which had been conveyed in batteaux along the lake shore, colonels Christie and Boerstler, with their respective regiments, the thirteenth and fourteenth, were detached, to take a position at the distance of two miles from the main body, on the neck of land which divides the lake from Burlington Bay, and on the road from fort George to York and Kingston. The distance of the main body of the British was about eight miles.

The ground occupied by general Chandler, was the high bank of Stoney Creek, on the opposite side of which there was a small meadow, and the bank was much lower. He halted immediately on the road, as the centre of his encampment. The fifth, a small detachment of the twenty-third, one company of the sixteenth infantry, occupied a height a short distance on the left. The object of this was to prevent, in case of a night attack, the occupation of ground which commanded the road; and at the same time, they could with facility be wheeled into line with the twenty-fifth along the high bank of the creek. The light artillery of captains Towson and Leonard, was posted in the road immediately on the right of the last mentioned regiment, so as to command the road in the direction of the enemy. The cavalry under colonel Burns, was placed in the rear, to be ready at a moment's warning. A guard of eighty or an hundred men, was posted a quarter of a mile in advance, at a wooden chapel on the road side. In other respects the usual precautions were taken.

The situation of the British army was almost hopeless. To contend openly with the superiour force of the Americans, was out of the question. No possibility of escape remained but by marching through the thinly inhabited country towards Detroit; and joining general Proctor; or attempting the fortune of a night attack. The first, in their present deficiency of supplies, was considered almost impracticable; the latter was, therefore, resolved upon. The existence of this alternative could not have escaped the penetration of the American generals, and

therefore the necessity of the utmost precaution. To the ultimate character of the campaign, the capture of the British would be of the greatest importance; as the necessary consequence, the contest to the westward would terminate, for it would no longer be possible for Proctor to hold out after his communication with the lower provinces had been cut off.

Until late in the evening, the twenty-fifth had occupied the meadow ground on the opposite side of the creek, where they had kindled fires for the purpose of cooking, but towards midnight were withdrawn to the position assigned them on the brow of the high bank. These precautions had well nigh proved fruitless, from the unaccountable negligence and misconduct of the main guard. Several of the sentinels in advance, were silently bayoneted by the enemy, who pushed a column of seven or eight hundred men, passed the chapel whilst the guard must have been buried in sleep, since not a shot was fired by them. On approaching the fires made by the twenty-fifth, and which had not yet been extinguished, they raised a tremendous Indian yell, expecting no doubt to bayonet the Americans, whom they supposed to be asleep a few paces from them. This yell was most fortunate for the Americans, who were instantly roused on the opposite bank, and as the twenty-fifth had lain on their arms, they instantly commenced a heavy fire on the British, who were revealed by the fires which had deluded them. General Winder, who commanded the troops on the left of the road, succeeded in a few moments in stationing the greater part of them on the edge of the creek, to the left of the artillery, and joined his fire with that of the twenty-fifth, which was by this time returned by the enemy, though with little effect. In twenty minutes the firing on the part of the British ceased, and as they had become invisible after passing the fires, the night being excessively dark, it was uncertain whether they had retired, or meant under cover of the darkness, to attack with the bayonet; the firing on the part of the Americans, was also ordered to cease. Arrangements were rapidly made to receive them. At this moment some shots in the rear of the army induced the general, who was apprehensive

that an attack might also be made in that quarter, to order one of the regiments to face about, and take such a position, as would enable him to repel it, whether made on flank or rear. Whilst general Chandler was directing these movements on the right, his horse fell under him; after recovering somewhat from the fall, which had stunned him, he attempted to walk towards the centre, near the artillery, where he and general Winder had met from time to time, to receive and communicate information and orders. In the meantime, favoured by the excessive darkness, which had been increased by the smoke, the enemy stole along the road unperceived, until they mingled with the artillerists, whom they drove from their pieces. At this moment general Chandler found himself in the midst of the enemy, and was taken prisoner.

General Winder, in returning from maintaining the dispositions on the left, met with a part of the sixteenth, which had either never reached its position, or had fallen back, and was posting it to protect the artillery, when, discovering some confusion there, he rushed forward to ascertain the cause, and was made prisoner in attempting to turn back what he supposed to be the American artillerists. The British finding two pieces limbered, drove them off, overturned one or two more, and retreated with precipitation and disorder. Before clear day-light the enemy had, in his retreat, covered himself from the view of the Americans by a wood. General Vincent was thrown from his horse, and did not rejoin his troops until the evening, almost exhausted with fatigue. Several gallant efforts were made, after the flight of the enemy, to recover the artillery. Lieutenant W. M'Donough prevented the capture of one piece, and lieutenant M'Chesney another; these officers, as well as colonel Burns, colonel Milton, captains Hindman, Archer, Steel and Leonard, were highly complimented in general orders.

The American loss was sixteen killed, and thirty-eight wounded, and two brigadiers, one major, three captains, and ninety-four missing. The loss of the enemy was much more severe, particularly in officers; one hundred prisoners were taken. Blame was attached to general Chandler, who commanded, but with very little reason;

still less of general Winder, who only met with such misfortune as the bravest and most prudent are subject to. Had the enemy been immediately pursued, there is little doubt they would have fallen into our hands. Colonel Burns, on a consultation with the officers, judged it most prudent to fall back on Forty Mile Creek, where he was joined by colonel Miller's regiment, who had been sent to guard the boats, and generals Lewis and Boyd, the former now assuming the command.

The British claimed in this affair a splendid victory. The accidental capture of the American generals would seem to give it the appearance of one; but in the action they were certainly beaten with great loss. Their object, however, was effected by the attack, though not to the extent which they had anticipated. The credit of this affair has been justly given to colonel Harvey, who is said to be an elegant and accomplished officer.

A flag having been sent into camp to obtain information of the killed and wounded, as also permission to bury the dead, but merely to obtain information, general Vincent immediately despatched a messenger to sir James Yoe, advising him of the position of the Americans. On the eighth sir James, with his squadron, appeared abreast of the encampment, and within a mile of the shore. He attempted to destroy the boats, and warped in a large schooner for the purpose; but captains Archer and Towson, in thirty minutes, constructed a furnace, and opened a fire with hot shot, which compelled him to haul off. A party of Indians now appeared upon the brow of the mountain, but were soon dislodged by lieutenant Eldridge, who gained the summit with a few volunteers, before the detachment which was ordered for the purpose. Sir James now demanded a surrender, with the usual story of Indians in the rear, a fleet in front, and regulars approaching. This artifice had grown stale, and could be played off no longer. Orders were now received from general Dearborn, for the army to return to fort George; the greater part of the camp equipage and baggage were put in boats, but were intercepted by an armed schooner, and twelve of them taken. The army broke up its encampment about ten o'clock, and took up its march for

fort George, harrassed nearly the whole way by Indians, who hung upon its flanks.

The movement of general Dearborn against the British fortifications on the Niagara, had well nigh cost him dear. The British having obtained information of it, resolved to seize the opportunity of the absence of our troops and fleet, to attack Sackett's Harbour. They well knew the importance to us of this place. It was the deposite of all our naval and military stores, both those captured at York, and those which had been collecting for a year, with a view to the operations against Canada. The convenience of this spot had caused it to be selected as the place to fit out the navies of the lake, and great quantities of timber and other materials were here collected for the construction of vessels. The new ship, the General Pike, was on the stocks, nearly ready to be launched, and the prize, the Gloucester, lay in the harbour. No time was to be lost in carrying into effect this important enterprise. Sir George Prevost selected a thousand picked men, and embarked them on board the fleet under commodore James Yeo. Scarcely had commodore Chauncey arrived at Niagara, when sir James shewed himself off the harbour, with the Wolf, the Royal George, the Prince Regent, Earl of Moira, and some smaller vessels. The small vessels under lieutenant Chauncey, left to give notice of the enemy's approach, espied the squadron, on the twenty-seventh, and hastened to the harbour, firing guns of alarm. This was immediately followed by the alarm guns on the shore, to bring in the militia, and to give notice to such regulars as might be near enough to hear them. Lieutenant colonel Backus, of the dragoons, had been left in command of the place; but in case of attack, general Brown, then at his residence eight miles off, was requested to take the command, although his brigade of militia had retired to their homes, their term of service having expired. The whole regular force consisted of a few seamen, lieutenant Fanning's artillery, about two hundred invalids, not exceeding in the whole five hundred men, and colonel Mills, with the Albany volunteers and some militia, amounting to about five hundred more. On the twenty-eighth, the enemy was

seen at the distance of about five miles, and seemed to be standing for the harbour, when a fleet of American barges was discovered coming round North Point, with troops from Oswego. Their attention was now occupied by these, and they succeeded in cutting off twelve of them; and taking it for granted that there were many more, they stood off all this day, with a view of intercepting them. In the meanwhile general Brown was diligently occupied, in making arrangements for the defence of the place, in which he discovered much judgment. But a small part of the ground adjacent to the village was cleared, the rest being surrounded by woods. At the only point of landing, a battery and breast-work were hastily constructed, and the militia placed behind them ready to receive the enemy as he landed, and to open a fire upon him in conjunction with the artillery. The regular troops, and the light artillery, were stationed in a second line nearer the barracks and publick buildings. On the approach of the enemy's boats, which were commanded by sir George Prevost in person, a well directed fire, which was opened upon them, compelled them to pause; several officers and men were seen to fall. Encouraged by this, they were engaged in loading a second time; the artillery would then open; when suddenly some unaccountable panick seized the militia, a panick, to which corps composed of the bravest men individually, are liable on being engaged for the first time; they fled in confusion, and their officers in vain attempted to rally them; their brave commander, colonel Mills, in attempting to effect it, was shot from his horse. The enemy now landed with little opposition, and having formed, advanced to the barracks; but were for a moment checked by a vigorous attack from a party of infantry, under major Aspinwall, and the dismounted dragoons under major Lavalley. These were compelled, by numbers, to retreat. A sharp conflict now ensued, with the regulars and artillery, under colonel Backus, which retired gradually, taking possession of the houses and barracks, whence they continued to annoy the enemy. The colonel, about this time, fell severely wounded. Shortly after the flight of the militia, general Brown succeeded

in rallying the company of captain M'Nitt, about ninety in number; with this he assailed the rear of the British, and in his own words, "did some execution." Finding that there was now little hope of repelling the enemy, so superior in force, and every moment gaining ground, he resorted to a ruse de guerre. A considerable part of the militia, now ashamed of their panick, had collected near the scene of action; the general instantly formed them, and marched them silently through the woods, so as to be discovered by the enemy. Sir George Prevost, believing that his rear was about to be cut off, ordered a retreat, which became a precipitate flight to the boats, leaving all his wounded and a number of prisoners.

The resistance at the barracks had been exceedingly obstinate; a destructive fire was poured from the buildings, while lieutenant Fanning, though severely wounded, still directed one not less so from his piece of artillery. Captain Gray, a valuable British officer and an accomplished gentleman, was shot by a small boy, a drummer, who snatched up a musket and fired at him, as he was advancing at the head of a column, to storm one of the barracks. This boy, who was an American, had served him in his kitchen, and on the war breaking out, had returned home; he now approached his former master while in his last agonies, and owned that he had shot him. Captain Gray generously forgave him, and with a nobleness of soul, of which we have had but too few examples on the part of Britain during the war, took out his watch and presented it to him, with these words, "my brave little fellow, you have done well." It is delightful to read such traits even in an enemy; whether the boy deserved his encomium or his curse, is a matter to be settled by casuists.

During the battle, a false alarm having been communicated to lieutenant Chauncey, that our troops had been defeated, he immediately, according to orders previously received, set fire to the publick store-houses; and the fire was not extinguished until considerable damage had been done. The loss of the Americans, in this affair was one colonel of volunteers, twenty regulars and one volunteer killed; one lieutenant colonel, three lieutenants and

one ensign of the regulars, and seventy-nine men, commissioned officers and regulars, wounded; and twenty-six missing; the loss of the enemy amounted to three field officers, two captains, and twenty rank and file found dead upon the ground; two captains and twenty rank and file wounded, besides those killed and wounded in the boats, and carried away previous to the retreat. On the same evening lieutenant colonel Little arrived, after a forced march of forty miles, with about six hundred men, and reinforcements were rapidly arriving from every quarter.

Notwithstanding this, a modest request of a surrender was made by sir George Prevost, which he soon after as modestly changed into a request for permission to bury the dead, and that the wounded in our hands should be attended to; of this he received satisfactory assurances. On his return to Kingston, he issued a vaunting proclamation, in which he announced a splendid victory, which no one believed. The injury inflicted on us was certainly considerable, but fell far short of the object of this expedition; and that he was compelled precipitately to retreat, he could not pretend to deny. General Brown received and deserved applause for his conduct on this occasion, which laid the ground work of his military celebrity.

Shortly after this affair, commodore Chauncey returned with his squadron; general Lewis took command of the place, and set about repairing the buildings and public store houses. General Dearborn, whose increasing indisposition disqualified him for an active command, retired from service, leaving colonel Boyd in command of fort George.

On the sixteenth of June, lieutenant Chauncey having been ordered to cruise off Presque Isle with the *Lady of the Lake*, captured the *Lady Murray*, with some officers and privates, besides a quantity of military stores. About the same time, a devastating and plundering party of the British made an attack on the village of Sodus, where some publick stores were deposited. On their approach, these were concealed in the woods, while the militia could be assembled to defend them. The British, exas-

perated at their disappointment, set fire to all the valuable buildings in the town, destroyed the private property of individuals, and were only induced to desist from the entire destruction of the place, on the stipulation of the inhabitants to deliver the publick stores at the wharf. The militia soon after appearing, the British were compelled to decamp with the booty they had already collected. They made a second attempt a few days afterwards, but were prevented from landing by the appearance of the militia. This marauding expedition had no pretext of retaliation to cover it.

About this time an affair of considerable moment took place near fort George, in which our arms again experienced a severe reverse. A detachment had been ordered out for the purpose of dislodging a party of the enemy at La Coose's house, about seventeen miles from fort George, where they had been stationed for some time, in the neighbourhood of two others still more formidable, but which were both nearer to fort George. Lieutenant colonel Børstler, was selected to command it. The expedition had no rational object, was dangerous and ill-judged. The detachment had not proceeded more than half way, when Indians were seen skulking across the wood in their rear. A camp of several hundred of these, lay between them and the point to which they were going. The Indians now attacked them from the adjoining woods; at last they were compelled to fly; but they kept up the fight long enough for the British parties to come up and attack them on all sides. Colonel Børstler continued to make a brave resistance, until his ammunition was nearly expended, and a third of his detachment placed *hors de combat*. His rear was assailed by a large body of British and Indians, and no way of retreating remained but by cutting his way through them. He proposed a charge upon the enemy; he had been twice summoned to surrender; on consultation with his officers, it was agreed to capitulate under the same stipulations as those of general Winchester, and which were but little better respected.

A few days after this, the British having been greatly reinforced by general De Rottenburgh, invested the

American camp. General Vincent was stationed at Burlington heights, and De Rottenburgh at Ten Mile Creek. The New-York volunteers were detained at the head of the lake, contrary to their parole, and on the twelfth were ordered to Kingston; but on the way a number effected their escape.

During the remainder of this and the succeeding months, a war of posts was kept up between the two armies. On the eighth of July, a severe skirmish was brought on, in which nearly the whole force on either side was engaged, without any thing of moment resulting from it. An incident, however, occurred, which served to exasperate the Americans to a higher degree than any thing during the war in this quarter. Lieutenant Eldridge, a gallant and accomplished youth, was drawn by his impetuosity too far, with about thirty men, and was surrounded by British and Indians. The greater part resisted until they were killed; but lieutenant Eldridge and ten others, were taken prisoners, and never afterwards heard of. The bodies of the slain were treated in the most shocking manner by the Indians: their hearts were taken out and actually eaten by those monsters, the allies of a christian king! General Boyd, considering the forbearance hitherto practised in declining the aid of Indian allies, as no longer justifiable, accepted the services of the Seneca nation, having about four hundred warriors, under Young Cornplanter, or Henry O. Beal, an Indian, educated at one of our colleges, but who on his return had resumed the blanket. It was, however, positively stipulated, that the unresisting and defenceless should not be hurt; and that no scalps should be taken; from this they never deviated during the war; but the circumstance of having Indians on our side, it was thought, might operate on the minds of the British.

On the eleventh of July, a force of two hundred of the enemy crossed the Niagara, and attacked Black Rock; the militia stationed there, at first fled, but soon returned with a force of regulars and Indians, and compelled them to fly to their boats, leaving nine of their men killed, and their commander, colonel Bishop, mortally wounded.

On the twenty-eighth of July, a second expedition was undertaken against York. Three hundred men, under

colonel Scott, embarked in commodore Chauncey's fleet, and suddenly landing at that place, drove the enemy, destroyed the publick stores and property, released a number of colonel Børstler's men, and returned to Sackett's Harbour, with a trifling loss.

The British, who were at this time pursuing the system of devastation along our sea-board, which will be recounted in the next chapter, were at the same time engaged in laying waste the country on the borders of lake Champlain. A little navy was also set on foot by both sides, on this lake, in the beginning of the year; but that of the United States was thus far less properous than that of the enemy. The whole American force, on this lake, consisted of a few armed barges, some gun-boats, and two schooners, the Growler and Eagle, under lieutenant Sidney Smith. In the beginning of July, the schooners were attacked near the entrance of this lake into the St. Lawrence, and after a severe resistance of three hours, against a very superiour force, were compelled to surrender. The British being now masters of the lake, cruised along its borders, landing in various places, and committing many depredations on the property of the inhabitants. On the thirty-first of July, twelve hundred men landed at Plattsburgh, where no resistance was made, a sufficient body of militia not being collected in time; they first destroyed all the publick buildings, and then wantonly burnt the storehouses of several of the inhabitants, and carried off great quantities of private property. The same outrages were committed afterwards at Swanton, in the state of Vermont. Such acts served only to provoke the inhabitants, and render them better disposed to give the enemy a warm reception at some other period.

On lake Ontario, a formidable naval armament, considering the size of this inland sea, was arrayed on either side, and an interesting contest ensued, between two skilful officers, for the superiority. The General Pike, of twenty-two guns, had been launched, and proved to be an excellent sailer, and commodore Chauncey was now fully equal, in point of strength, to his antagonist. Sir James, though somewhat inferiour in force, had the ad-

vantage in an important particular, his ships sailed better in squadron, and he could therefore avoid or come to an engagement when he should think proper. But it being a matter all important for the British, to prevent the Americans from becoming masters of the lake, sir James prudently avoided a general action, and on all occasions exerted his utmost skill, with this intention. On the contrary, to bring him to action, was the utmost wish of commodore Chauncey; and the manœuvres on either side, are said to be amongst the most skilful known in the history of naval tacticks. On the seventh of August, they came in sight of each other, the fleets about equal force. Commodore Chauncey manœuvred to gain the wind. Having passed the leeward of the enemy's line, and being abreast of his van ship, the *Wolf*, he fired a few guns to ascertain whether he could reach the hostile fleet. The shot falling short, he wore and hauled upon a wind to the starboard tack; the rear of the commodore's schooners being six miles astern. Sir James wore also, and hauled upon a wind on the same tack, but observing that the American fleet would be able to weather him in the next tack, he tacked again and made all sail to the northward. Commodore Chauncey pursued him. The chase was continued until night, but the schooners not being able to keep up, a signal was made to give up the pursuit, our force in close order. The wind now blew heavy, and at midnight, two of the schooners, the *Scourge* and the *Hamilton*, were found to have overset in the squall. Lieutenants Winter and Osgood, two valuable officers, were lost, and only sixteen men of the crew saved. The next morning the enemy, discovering this loss, appeared to be disposed to engage, and seemed to bear off for that purpose, having now the superiority. Two schooners were ordered to move up and engage him, but when within a mile and a half, he attempted to cut them off, in which he failed; he then hauled his wind and hove to. A squall coming on, and commodore Chauncey being apprehensive of separating from his dull sailing schooners, ran in towards *Niagara* and anchored. Here he received on board, from fort George, one hundred and fifty men to act as marines, and distributed them through his

fleet; he again sailed and continued until eleven o'clock, at times pursuing and being pursued, when the rear of the line opened its fire, which in fifteen minutes became general on both sides. At half past eleven, the weather line bore off, and passed to the leeward, except the Growler and Julia, which soon after tacked to the southward, and brought the British between them and the remainder of the American fleet, which then edged away to engage the enemy to more advantage, and to lead him from the two schooners. Sir James exchanged a few shot with the American commodore's ship, and pursued the Growler and Julia. A firing commenced between them, which continued until one o'clock in the morning of the tenth. A desperate resistance was made against this superiour force to which the two vessels were compelled to yield; Sir James' ship is said to have been considerably injured. The next day he was visible, but shewed no disposition to come to action. Commodore Chauncey soon after returned to Sackett's Harbcur. A victory for this affair was claimed by sir James Yeo; his situation would not allow him to be candid, for he was compelled to keep up an appearance of being willing to engage the American squadron, although he had no such intention; he expected, however, to be able to cut off our dull sailing schooners in detail.

CHAPTER VIII.

War on the coast—Exploits of Cockburn—Plundering and burning of Havre-de-Grace—Burning of Georgetown and Fredericktown—Arrival of admiral Warren and sir Sidney Beekwith—Southern cities threatened—Attack on Craney Island—Enormities at Hampton—Cockburn plunders the coast of North Carolina—Blockade of the American squadron at New London, by commodore Hardy—The torpedo system.

DURING the first year of the war, Great Britain being deeply engaged in the important transactions then going on in Europe, had little time to attend to the war with this country: not one of our ports could be said to have been in a state of actual blockade.

The forces which she could spare, were sent to Canada. The change in the face of things in Europe, gave her a greater disposable force, and more leisure, while our unparalleled victories on the ocean, awakened her attention, and kindled a desire for revenge. Long before spring it was known that a British squadron had arrived at Bermuda with a body of troops on board, and well supplied with bombs and rockets, for the purpose of attacking some of our most exposed southern cities. For the invidious distinction was made between the north and south, from a belief, that the northern states were not merely unfriendly to the war, but were strongly inclined to secede from the union, and return to their former allegiance to the king of England.

We are now about to enter upon a species of hostilities, entirely new among civilized people. The scenes which we must pass in review, can scarcely be spoken of with moderation. They are compounded of the avaricious and plundering barbarity, which characterizes the pirates of the Mediterranean, and of the savage ferocity of the scenes which disgraced the River Raisin. Whatever may be the reputations of the chief actors in England, they can never be otherwise regarded in this country, than as the infamous instruments in the perpetration of enormities, from which the honourable man would

shrink with instinctive horror. The recollection of the prison ships and other enormities, during the revolutionary war, when England chose to regard us as traitors, and which the generosity and wisdom of England ought to have kept from our minds, was renewed with all possible aggravation, now that she chose to regard us as double traitors. If it has been her intention to plant an eternal hatred in the hearts of a people, destined at some future day to become numerous and powerful, she has certainly fallen upon the proper means. To say that these things should be passed over lightly, because we are now at peace with her, would be a scandal to every American; it would be a desertion of truth, justice, religion, humanity; it would be passing over lightly and indulgently, the most complicated crimes, and sinking at once every distinction between infamy and virtue.

It was soon understood, that the war to be carried on against the Atlantic coast in the spring, was to be a war of havock and destruction; but to what extent was not exactly known. The enemy, however, "talked of chastising us into submission," and it was expected, that our large commercial towns, now somewhat fortified against the approach of their shipping, would be vigorously attacked; and, from the example we had seen at Copenhagen, it was not impossible that they would be much injured, and perhaps reduced to ashes. Small bodies of regular troops were stationed at different points along the sea-board, to form the rallying points of the militia, which might be called out as occasion should require: a number of marines and seamen, belonging to publick vessels, which did not put to sea, were also to co-operate in this service.

On the fourth of February, a squadron consisting of two ships of the line, three frigates, and other vessels, made its appearance in the Chesapeake, apparently standing for Hampton Roads. The alarm was immediately caught at Norfolk, and the militia called in from the upper part of the state. No attempt, however, was made upon the town, the enemy contenting himself with destroying the smaller vessels employed in the navigation of the bay, and effectively blockading its waters.


About the same time, another squadron, under the command of commodore Beresford, appeared in the Delaware, consisting of the Poictiers, the Belvidera, and some other vessels, which in the same manner destroyed a number of small trading vessels, and attempted several times to land some of their men, who were as often repulsed by the militia, hastily collected. On the tenth of April, sir John Beresford made a demand on the people of the village of Lewistown, for a supply of provisions, which was spiritedly refused by colonel Davis, commanding at that place. Captain Byron, of the Belvidera, was ordered to move near the village and bombard it, until the demand should be complied with. This was obeyed, but without effect; after a cannonade of twenty hours, they were unable to make any impression on the place. Their fire had been returned from some batteries, hastily thrown up on the bank, with considerable effect. On the tenth of May, the same squadron sent out their barges in the neighbourhood of Lewistown, to procure water. Major George Hunter was detached by colonel Davis, with one hundred and fifty men, to oppose their landing, which the major did with so much gallantry, that he compelled them to hasten to their shipping. The squadron soon after returned to Bermuda, where sir J. Borlace Warren, who commanded on this station, was engaged in fitting out a more considerable armament, for the attack of our sea-coast during the summer.

Soon after the departure of the squadron, the Spartan, and some other frigates entered the Delaware. One of their vessels, the Martin, was discovered on the twenty-ninth of July, slightly grounded on the outer edge of Crow's shoals. A detachment of the gunboat flotilla immediately moved, and anchoring in a line about three-quarters of a mile from the sloop, opened a destructive fire upon her. The Junon frigate soon after came off to her relief; a cannonade was kept up during an hour between the gunboats and these two vessels, in which the latter suffered great injury. Finding it impossible to drive off this musquito fleet, they manned their launches, tenders, and cutters, to cut off the gunboats at the extremity of the line. No. 121, commanded by sailing-master Head, was unfortunately taken, after a desperate

resistance against eight times her number. The British soon after made sail, the Martin having been extricated from her situation.

Scenes of a different kind were, in the meanwhile, acting in the Chesapeake. The squadron, which returned in February, still continued to carry on a predatory war along the shores and inlets. It was here, that one Cockburn, by some means an admiral in the service of the king of England, exhibited the first of those exploits, for which he afterwards became so highly celebrated; and of which he may justly claim to be the originator. At first they were directed against the detached farm-houses and seats of private gentlemen, unprepared for, and incapable of defence; these were robbed, and the owners treated in the rudest manner. The cattle which could not be carried away, were doomed to wanton destruction; the slaves were armed against their owners, and persuaded to follow the example of their new friends, to attack their master's defenceless families, and to engage in pillaging them. It was impossible to station a force at each farm-house, to repel these miserable and disgraceful incursions; yet, in several instances, Cockburn and his ruffians were bravely repelled by a collection of the neighbours without authority, and under no leader. The spirited citizens of Maryland formed bodies of cavalry, which were stationed at intervals along the shore, to be drawn out at a moment's warning, for the purpose of repelling the sudden inroads of the enemy. Cockburn took possession of several islands in the bay, particularly Sharp's, Tilghman's, and Poplar islands, whence he could seize the opportunity of making a descent upon the neighbouring shores, when the inhabitants happened to be off their guard.

Encouraged by his success against the farmers, and his rapacity increasing by the booty which he had already obtained, Cockburn now resolved to undertake something of a more bold and adventurous character, in which his thirst for plunder, and his love of mischief, might be gratified in a higher degree. He therefore directed his attention to the unprotected villages and hamlets along the bay; carefully avoiding the larger towns, the plundering



of which might be attended with some danger. The first of these exploits was against the village of Frenchtown, containing six dwelling houses, two large store houses, and several stables. It is important, however, as a place of deposite on the line of packets and stages from Philadelphia to the city of Baltimore, and Cockburn rightly conjectured that here there might be private property to a considerable amount. He accordingly set out on this expedition, from his ship, the Marlborough, in barges, with five hundred marines; a sufficient number to have carried the town on their backs. Some show of resistance was made by a small party of militia collected from Elkton, but which moved off as the admiral approached. The storehouses were destroyed, together with the goods they were unable to carry off, to an immense amount. Amongst other objects of wanton destruction, was an elegant drop-curtain, intended for the theatres of the cities before mentioned. The brand was applied to some of the private dwelling houses, and to several vessels lying at the wharf; after achieving this glorious victory, the admiral, fearing the approach of the militia, hastily retired to his ship.

The next exploit of the admiral, was of still greater importance. The town of Havre-de-Grace is situated on the Susquehanna, about two miles from the head of the bay, and is a neat village, containing twenty or thirty houses. An attack on this place was the next object which entered into the plan of the admiral's operations. Accordingly, on the third of May, before day-light, his approach was announced by a few cannon shot, and the firing of rockets. The inhabitants, roused from their sleep, leaped up in the greatest consternation, and the more courageous repaired to the beach, where a few small pieces of artillery had been planted on a kind of battery for the purpose of defence against the smaller watering or plundering parties of the enemy. After firing a few shots, with the exception of an old citizen of the place, of the name of O'Neill, they all fled on the approach of the barges, abandoning the village to the mercy of Cockburn. O'Neill alone continued the fight, loading a piece of artillery, and firing it himself, until by recoiling it ran over his thigh

and wounded him severely. He then armed himself with a musket, and limping away, still kept up a retreating fight with the advancing column of the British, who had by this time landed and formed; after which he moved off to join his five or six comrades, whom he attempted in vain to rally.

The enemy had no sooner taken possession of the village, by this sudden and bold assault, than they set themselves about destroying the private dwellings, and plundering their contents. Having glutted their avarice, they then amused themselves with every species of barbarous and wanton mischief. The houses being now on fire, they cut open the beds of the inhabitants, and threw in the feathers to increase the flame. Women and children fled shrieking in every direction, to avoid the brutal insolence of the British seamen and marines, and no where did they find a protector amongst these savages. Their clothes were torn from their backs, and they felt themselves at every moment in danger of being massacred. Not on women and children alone were these outrages committed; the stage horses kept at this place were cruelly maimed, and the stages broken to pieces. Determined that their character should not be equivocal, these worse than vandals, selected as the next object of their barbarous vengeance, a neat and beautiful building, dedicated to the worship of the Almighty, and with unusual pains defaced its doors and windows. One building yet remained undemolished, an elegant dwelling belonging to commodore Rodgers, where the most respectable females of the town had taken refuge with their children, believing that a naval officer would not wantonly insult the unprotected wife of a brave and gallant seaman, who was then absent in the service of his country. The officer to whom the task of conflagration had been assigned, already held the torch, when with much solicitation he consented to wait a few moments, until an appeal to the admiral could be made. It proved successful, and it is mentioned to his praise, that he only refrained on one occasion from doing that which would have been the climax of brutality. There being no further mischief for them to perpetrate in the village, they divided their force into

three parts, and while one remained to keep watch, the others proceeded to lay waste the adjacent country. One party followed the road towards Baltimore for several miles, plundering the farm-houses, and robbing the travellers on the road of their clothes and money; the other proceeded up the river, committing similar outrages. It were endless to enumerate the acts of base and wanton injury, inflicted by this party, during the short time which they remained. On the sixth, to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants, these savages, than whom those of the west were not worse, returned to their fleet. O'Neill, who had been taken prisoner, was carried with them and detained several days, at the end of which time they thought proper to release him. The inhabitants of the village, many of whom were almost ruined, threw themselves on the humanity of their fellow-citizens of Baltimore, who generously contributed to their relief, and they were soon after enabled to commence the re-building of their houses.

Elated with the profitable issue of this descent, in which so rich a booty was obtained with so little danger, the enemy was eager for some other enterprise equally honourable to the British arms. The admiral had cast his eye on two beautiful villages, situated on the river - *Sassafras*; which empties itself into the bay; *Georgetown* and *Fredericktown*, situated opposite each other, one in *Kent*, the other in *Cecil county*. His hired agents, for miscreants may be found in every country for such purposes, had informed him, that here he might glut his crew with plunder. On the sixth, placing himself at the head of six hundred men, in eighteen barges, he ascended the river, and proceeded towards *Fredericktown*. Colonel *Veazy* had collected here about fifty militia, on the approach of the barges, which immediately commenced a heavy fire with langrage, shot and musketry. The greater part of the militia fled, and left colonel *Veazy* to oppose them as he could; he, notwithstanding, kept up a steady fire, until they approached so near that he was compelled to retreat. The admiral boldly advanced to the town, plundered the houses, and in spite of the entreaties of the women and children, again acted the in-

cendiary, and leaving Fredericktown in flames, passed to the opposite side of the river, where after having treated the village of Georgetown in the same manner, he returned gluttled with spoil and satiated with wanton havoc.

It was not long after this, that admiral Warren entered the bay with a considerable reinforcement, and a number of land troops and marines, under the command of sir Sidney Beckwith. They had seized a number of the smaller vessels employed in the navigation of the bay, for the purpose of being used in penetrating the various inlets, impervious to their larger tenders. To oppose to these small parties, employed in frequent and distressing depredations on the property of private individuals, the government hired a number of barges and light vessels, which by moving from place to place with great rapidity, would tend to keep the enemy in cheek. On the arrival of admiral Warren, their force, which appeared in the Chesapeake, consisted of seven ships of the line, and twelve frigates, with a proportionate number of smaller vessels. The appearance of this formidable force, created much alarm in the more considerable towns along the Chesapeake. Baltimore, Annapolis, and Norfolk, were threatened. The last of these places, it was evident was to receive the first blow.

On the eighteenth, commodore Cassin, having received intelligence that a squadron of the enemy had arrived in Hampton Roads, now made the necessary dispositions for repelling the invader. The frigate Constellation was anchored between the two forts, on each side of Elizabeth river, which commands the approach to Norfolk. At this place nearly ten thousand of the Virginia militia had been already collected. The gunboat flotilla was ordered in the meanwhile to descend the river, and engage the foremost of the enemy's frigates. Captain Tarbell, by whom it was commanded, proceeded in two divisions; the first commanded by lieutenant Gardner, and the other by lieutenant Henley. On the twentieth, having brought his gunboats into a favourable position, he opened a rapid fire upon the Junon frigate, at the distance of half a mile. This was returned, and continued

for half an hour, apparently to the great injury of the frigate, the gunboats suffering but little. Another vessel, which proved to be a *razee*, was seen coming to her assistance; the fire of the *Junon* for a short time appeared to have been silenced, but on the arrival of her consort, and additional frigates, she again opened. Captain Tarbell now thought proper to retire. The *Junon* was much shattered; and her loss, considering the great disparity of force, is thought to have been considerable.

A formidable attack on Norfolk was resolved upon by the British; preparatory to this, it would be necessary to subdue the forts by which it was protected. The nearest obstruction to the enemy's advances, was Craney island; and in the course of the day, they dropped to the mouth of James' river. Captain Tarbell gave orders to lieutenants Neal, Shubrick and Saunders, of the frigate *Constellation*: to land with a hundred seamen on the island, for the purpose of manning a battery on the north-west side, while he stationed the gunboats in such a manner as to enable him to annoy the enemy from the opposite side. On the twenty-second, at day-light, they were discovered approaching round the point of Nansimond river, with about four thousand men, a great proportion of whom, it was afterwards ascertained, were wretched French troops, who had been taken prisoners in Spain, and induced to enter into the British service, under promise of being permitted to pillage and abuse the citizens of the United States. They selected a place of landing out of the reach of the gunboats; but unfortunately for them, not out of the reach of danger. When they had approached within two hundred yards of the shore, lieutenant Neale, assisted by lieutenants Shubrick and Saunders, opened a galling fire upon them, which compelled them to pause. The battery was mounted with an eighteen-pounder, and manned by one hundred and fifty men, including lieutenant Breckenridge's marines. The piece was directed with so much precision, that several of their boats were cut in two, and the men with difficulty escaped. The *Centipede*, the admiral's barge, was sunk, and the whole force was compelled to make a precipitate retreat. This was no sooner disco-

vered, than lieutenant Neale ordered his men to haul up the boats, which had been sunk, and to afford the unfortunate sufferers every assistance in their power. A large body of the enemy who had landed on the main shore, were not less warmly received by the Virginia volunteers, on their crossing the narrow inlet to the west. A short time before the approach of the barges, this body of men, about eight hundred in number, attempted to cross to the island by the inlet of which we have spoken; colonel Beate had been posted, with about four hundred men, to guard the pass; two twenty-four pounders, and two sixes, were planted to oppose the passage, under the direction of major Faulkner, and the guns commanded by captain Emerson, and lieutenants Howel and Godwin. The conflict here raged at the same moment with the attack on the party approaching by water. The enemy was compelled to give up the attempt in this quarter also. His loss in this signal repulse, was upwards of two hundred in killed and wounded, besides a number of deserters, who seized the opportunity of making their escape.

The safety of the city of Norfolk, and of the surrounding towns of Gosport, Portsmouth, and others, is to be attributed to the resolute defence of Craney island. The conduct of lieutenant Neale and his brave companions, Shubrick, Saunders, and Breckenridge, received the grateful acknowledgements of the inhabitants. Colonel Beate and his officers, and two non-commissioned volunteers, sergeant Young and corporal Moffit, were no less entitled to praise for the parts which they took in this interesting affair.

This unexpected repulse enraged the enemy beyond measure. At the same time that their desire of revenge was excited, in consequence of their disappointment in the sacking of Norfolk, they were taught greater prudence in the selection of the object of attack. In a consultation between admiral Warren, sir Sidney Beckwith, and Cockburn, they determined on attacking the town of Hampton, distant about eighteen miles from Norfolk. There was a garrison here, consisting of about four hundred men, artillerists and infantry. The fortifications of the place were of very little consequence; in fact, it was but

an open village, of little more importance, than those pillaged by Cockburn. It was thought, that by possessing this place, the communication between Norfolk and the upper country would be entirely cut off. On the twenty-fifth, the plan of attack having been adjusted, admiral Cockburn advanced towards the town, with a number of barges, tenders, and smaller vessels, throwing rockets, and firing towards the town, while sir Sidney landed below, at the head of two thousand men, intending to march up and gain the rear of the Americans. Admiral Cockburn was so warmly received by major Crutchfield, the officer commanding at Hampton, who opened upon him a few pieces of artillery, that he was compelled instantly to withdraw, and conceal himself behind a point. In the meanwhile, sir Sidney made his appearance, and was severely handled by a rifle company under captain Servant, which had been posted in a wood, near which he had to pass. Major Crutchfield, soon after drew up his infantry in support of the riflemen; but finding himself unable to contend with numbers so superior, he made good his retreat, not, however, without great difficulty. Captain Pryor, who had been left to command the battery, which opposed the enemy's landing, found that the royal marines had approached within sixty yards of him; his corps considering itself in a situation hopeless of escape, already regarded themselves as prisoners of war; when he ordered the guns to be spiked, and charging upon the enemy, threw them into confusion, and actually effected his escape without the loss of a single man. The loss of the Americans, in this affair, amounted to seven killed and twelve wounded; that of the British, according to their acknowledgements, was five killed and thirty-three wounded; but probably much more considerable.

We have again to record the inhuman and detestable conduct of those entrusted by Great Britain, with the direction of the war against America. Conduct which can scarcely find a parallel in the atrocious deeds committed by the savages at the river Raisin. A series of equal outrages on all the laws of honourable war, is not to be met with in authentick history. No sooner was this village in quiet possession of the invaders, than full per-

mission was given to the vile mercenary wretches which composed the British force, to give a loose to their worst passions and propensities. After acting the usual scenes of shameless plunder and devastation, in which officers and men took an equal share; they proceeded to offer violence to the persons of the unfortunate inhabitants, whose age, whose sex, whose infirmities precluded the possibility of escape. The wretched females were consigned to the gratification of the brutal desires of a brutal soldiery, with circumstances of indignity unheard of. Wives were torn from the sides of their wounded husbands, daughters from their mothers, and violated in their presence. Human nature was shocked beyond endurance at the detested spectacle; mothers clasping their helpless babes to their bosoms, endeavoured to plunge at once into the sea, as the last sad refuge of despair; but even this was denied them; they were driven back, and compelled to undergo what was worse than ten thousand deaths. Was there no British officer, who, on this occasion, felt for the honour of his country, and endeavoured, at the risk of his life, to save it from this indelible reproach? It seems there was not one. The heart of humanity cannot fill up the disgusting picture with its revolted particulars. Would it be believed, that a sick old man, of the name of Kirby, unable to rise from his bed, was set upon by these fiends, and murdered in the arms of his aged wife, who, because she desired to remonstrate, received the contents of a pistol in her body; and, to complete the sacrilegious scene, they wantonly and cruelly put to death their faithful dog. Two sick men were murdered in the hospital, the medical stores were destroyed, all the wounded who fell into their hands, were not only denied medical aid, but even common sustenance, during two days, that they thus threw aside, not merely the character of soldiers, of christians, but of men.

This picture is by no means overcharged. It is founded upon the fullest evidence submitted to a committee of congress, which reported upon it in still stronger terms. But the substance was not denied by sir Sidney Beckwith, to whom it was communicated by general Taylor, and the greater part actually acknowledged. The

feelings of the people, throughout Virginia, were, if possible, more excited on this subject, than were those of the people of Kentucky, at the massacres under Proctor. General Taylor, who commanded the station, addressed a letter to sir Sidney Beckwith, conceived in that species of dignified and appalling eloquence, which the feelings of an honourable man alone can dictate, on the subject of such an outrage, and by which guilt is compelled to seek for refuge in the sheltering meanness of falsehood and prevarication. General Taylor, after stating the enormities of which the British troops had been guilty, desired to be informed of the nature of the war intended to be carried on against the United States; whether the scenes at Hampton had been unauthorized by the British government, or whether that government had entirely thrown aside the ordinary usages of war, which govern civilized nations. "Worthless," said he, "is the laurel steeped in female tears, and joyless the conquests which have inflicted needless wo on the peaceful and unresisting." Sir Sidney replied, that he was sorry for the excesses at Hampton, and hoped that, in future, the war would be carried on with as much regard to humanity as possible. This evasive answer was not received as satisfactory; one more explicit was required. He then declared that the excesses were committed in retaliation, for the conduct on the part of the Americans at Craney island, in shooting at the seamen, who clung to a barge which had overset. General Taylor immediately instituted a court of inquiry, which proved the charge to be without foundation. On the result being communicated, sir Sidney did not think proper to give a written reply; but promised verbally to withdraw his troops from the neighbourhood, and excused himself, on the score of his not having been acquainted with the kind of war to which these men had been accustomed in Spain; that, in fact, they could not be restrained: but, he added, that as soon as he had found them engaged in such excesses, he had given orders for them to re-embark. The facts will not, however, support the excuse, and there is no criminal who has perpetrated the grossest crime, that cannot fabricate as good. It is unpleasant to implicate admiral Warren, and sir Sidney

Beckwith, in this detestable affair, as their conduct has been in general of a different character. This is much more the element of Cockburn, who doubtless shared in it with peculiar pleasure. But there was in the conduct of the two officers before mentioned, a shameful indifference upon a subject, which so deeply regarded the character of the British government; if such indifference be wise or not, the history of the world will decide. As to the assertion, that the scenes at Hampton were similar to those which had occurred in Spain, it by no means clears the British character; but, in reality, such acts of atrocity were never perpetrated in Spain, or in any other country.

The squadron, during the remainder of the summer, frequently threatened the cities of Washington, Annapolis, and Baltimore. Large bodies of militia were on several occasions drawn out, and the country in consequence much harassed. This was fair and justifiable in the enemy, and is no subject of complaint; and had any of our towns been laid in ashes, while attempting a resistance, it would only have been regarded as a misfortune of war, which the enemy had a right to inflict. Cockburn was permitted to pursue his own inclination, in moving to the south with a formidable squadron, to carry on in the Carolinas and Georgia, the same species of warfare, which he had so successfully practised in the Chesapeake. In the beginning of July, the admiral appeared off the Ocracoke river, in North Carolina, and shortly after crossed the bar, and with a number of barges, attacked two private armed vessels, the *Anaconda* and the *Atlas*, which, after a gallant resistance, were captured. The revenue cutter, then in port, made her escape to Newbern, at which place the militia assembled in such numbers, that the admiral's designs upon it were frustrated. He landed about three thousand men, then proceeded to Portsmouth, and having treated the inhabitants in the same manner, as he had treated those of the Chesapeake, he returned with a valuable booty, and a number of slaves, who had been induced to leave their masters, under a promise of freedom, but who were afterwards sold in the West Indies.

To the north of the Chesapeake, although these disgraceful depredations were not committed, the coast was not exempt from the effects of war. A strict blockade was kept up at New-York. The American frigates *United States* and *Macedonian*, and the sloop *Hornet*, attempted to sail on a cruise from that port about the beginning of May; but finding the force at the Hook much superior to theirs, they put back, and passed through Hell Gate, with the intention of passing out by the Sound. In this they were once more frustrated; and on the first of June, after another attempt, they were chased into New London. Six hundred militia were immediately called in from the surrounding country, for the protection of the squadron; commodore Decatur, landing some of his guns, mounted a battery on the shore, and at the same time so lightened his vessels, as to enable them to ascend the river, out of the reach of the enemy. This place was so well fortified, that no attempt was made upon it, but the blockade was strictly kept up for many months.

It is pleasing to contrast the conduct of commodore Hardy, who commanded the squadron north of the Chesapeake, with that of Cockburn. His conduct was uniformly that of a brave, humane, and honourable officer. Although he frequently landed on different parts of the coast, his deportment was such as might be expected from a manly and generous enemy. Such an enemy we had reason to dread; but the depredations of the other, could only tend to provoke the inhabitants of this country, and to sink all party feelings in the opposition to the war. If the procedure of Cockburn was authorised by his government, it was dictated by a very mistaken policy, for nothing could more effectually heal political differences, and render the war a common cause with every American.

An act of congress had been passed during the last winter, which cannot be mentioned without feelings of regret. Some excuse may be found for it in the irritation produced, in consequence of the mode of warfare, which the enemy had threatened to pursue. By this act, a reward of half the vessels destroyed, was offered to such

as should effect the destruction, by any other means, than by the armed or commissioned vessels of the United States. The measure originated with the torpedo scheme, of which so much at that time was said. There is something unmanly in this insidious mode of annoyance; it is not justifiable even for defence against an unsparing foe. It is but little better than poisoning fountains, and preparing mines. Valour can claim no share in such exploits, and to the brave mind little pleasure can be derived from the recollection of having thus treacherously destroyed an enemy. It is forbidden by the same reason which forbids us to strike the unresisting, because there is no opportunity of defence. The laurel which is not fairly won, is of no value to the real hero. It had been in the power of general Sinclair, to have poisoned his spirituous liquors at the moment of his defeat, and to have destroyed our cruel enemy; but shame would have followed the infliction of such an injury, even upon savages.

Several attempts at blowing up the enemy's vessels were made in consequence of the law. The most remarkable were those against the *Ramilies*, the admiral's ship, the other against the *Plantagenet*. Some time in June, the schooner *Eagle* having been filled with flour barrels, and containing a quantity of gunpowder, had a gunlock fixed at the bottom, so contrived as to explode the powder in the attempt to unload. She was then thrown in the way of the blockading squadron's boats; fortunately, the seamen, instead of taking her along side of the *Ramilies*, determined first to take out some of the cargo; in doing this, the schooner blew up, and destroyed several of the British seamen. The next experiment was made with the torpedo, against the *Plantagenet*, then lying below Norfolk. After four or five attempts, in which the persons engaged could not come sufficiently near the ship, without being discovered, the torpedo was dropped at the distance of an hundred yards, and swept down by the tide, and on approaching the vessel, exploded in the most awful manner; an immense column of water was thrown up, which fell with vast weight upon the deck; a yawning gulph was opened, in which she appeared to have been swallowed up. By the light of the explosion, it was

discovered that the fore-castle had been blown off. The ship's crew soon after took to their boats, completely panic-struck. Commodore Hardy was justly indignant at this attempt, and protested in strong terms against a species of annoyance, which he considered dishonourable. It had the effect, however, of compelling the enemy to be extremely cautious in his approach to our harbours; and although the torpedo system was not afterwards put in practice, the enemy's apprehensions from it served to keep them at a greater distance. If any thing could justify this mode of attack, it had been the scenes of Hampton, and the deportment of Cockburn and his crew; but commodore Hardy was a generous enemy, and merited a different treatment.

CHAPTER IX.

Naval affairs—The *Hornet* captures the *Peacock*—The *Shannon* captures the *Chesapeake*—The *Pelican* captures the *Argus*—The *Enterprise* captures the *Boxer*—Cruise of commodore Porter in the South Seas—Cruise of commodore Rodgers—Of captain Sterret—The privateer General Armstrong—The *Decatur* captures the *Dominica*.

It is now time to return to the affairs of our navy. Our vessels still continued to annoy the enemy, in spite of her thousand ships, which hunted them in squadrons through every sea. Instead of courting an engagement with them, they studiously avoided coming in contact, where their force was not greatly superiour. The "fir built frigates" of America, had all at once become ships of the line, and Great Britain razed or cut down her seventy-fours, that she might have vessels to engage with ours on equal terms. Thus far it was shown to the world, that the Americans might yield to superiour force, but could not be conquered. The United States had now become so sensible of the importance of their marine, that congress, during the last session, had authorized the building

several additional vessels, and it was proposed to continue to augment our navy by annual appropriations for this purpose. This was undoubtedly wise policy; for whatever we have to fear from a considerable standing army, there can be no cause of distrust of a navy. Besides; it is only on that element, we can come in contact with an enemy of consequence. Fortunately for us, our territory adjoins to that of no power, from which we need apprehend any great danger; the colonies of England and of Spain might have reason to fear us, if the genius of our government were not opposed to conquest; but we have no cause to fear them. On the ocean, however, we must unavoidably come in contact with other nations, as long as we pretend to have commerce; and without a navy, that commerce cannot be protected.

In the last chapter, on the subject of our naval war, it will be recollected, that the *Hornet* was left to blockade the *Bonne Citoyenne*, at St. Salvador. This vessel was formally challenged by the *Hornet*; but whether from her unwillingness to risk the loss of a quantity of specie which she had on board, or that she was not inclined to engage in the combat, though of superiour force, she thought proper to pay no attention to the challenge.—Commodore Bainbridge, we have seen, had parted from the *Hornet* at this place, in order that the *Bonne Citoyenne* might have no excuse for declining the invitation, and it will be recollected how gloriously he met the *Java* a few days afterwards. The *Hornet* continued the blockade until the twenty-fourth of January, when the *Montague* hove in sight, and compelled her to escape into port. She ran out, however, the same night, and proceeded on a cruise. Her commander first shaped his course to Pernambuco, and on the fourth of February captured the English brig *Resolution*, of ten guns, with twenty-three thousand dollars in specie. He then ran down the coast of Morahan, cruised off there a short time, and thence off Surinam, where he also cruised for some time, and on the twenty-second stood for Demerara: The next day he discovered an English brig of war lying at anchor outside of the bar, and on beating around Carabona Bank, to come near her, he discovered, at half

past three o'clock in the afternoon, another sail on his weather quarter, edging down for him. This proved to be a large man of war brig, the Peacock, captain Peak, somewhat superiour to the Hornet in force. Captain Lawrence manœuvred some time to gain the weather gage, then hoisted the American ensign, tacked about, and in passing each other, they exchanged broadsides at the distance of pistol shot. The Peacock being then discovered in the act of wearing, Lawrence now bore up, received his starboard broadside, ran her down on board, on the starboard quarter, and poured into her so heavy a fire, that in fifteen minutes she not only surrendered, but hoisted a signal of distress, as she was literally cut to pieces, and had already six feet water in her hold.

Lieutenant Shubrick, whose conduct in this affair was not less conspicuous, than in the actions with the Guerriere and Java, was despatched to bring her officers and crew on board the Hornet. He found that the captain of the vanquished vessel had been killed, the greater part of her crew had been either killed or wounded, and that the vessel was sinking fast, in spite of every effort to keep her above water. Every exertion was made to take off the crew before the vessel sunk; her guns were thrown overboard, the shot holes were plugged, and a part of the Hornet's crew, at the risk of their lives, laboured incessantly to save the vanquished. The utmost efforts of these generous men were vain; she sunk in the midst of them, carrying down nine of her own crew, and three of the American. Thus did our gallant countrymen twice risk their lives, first in the cause of their country, and next in the cause of humanity; first to conquer their enemies, and then to save them. These are actions which unfortunately fall too rarely to the lot of the historian to record. Of all our naval victories, this is the one which Americans recollect with most pleasure; and surely there cannot be a higher proof of the generosity of feeling which predominates in the nation. The crew of the Hornet divided their clothing with the prisoners, who were left destitute by the sinking of the ship; and so sensible were the officers of the generous treatment, which they experienced from captain Lawrence

and his men, that on their arrival at New-York, they expressed their gratitude in a publick letter of thanks. "So much," say they, "was done to alleviate the uncomfortable and distressing situation in which we were placed, when received on board the ship you command, that we cannot better express our feelings, than by saying, we ceased to consider ourselves prisoners; and every thing that friendship could dictate, was adopted by you and the officers of the *Hornet*, to remedy the inconvenience we otherwise would have experienced, from the unavoidable loss of the whole of our property and clothes, by the sudden sinking of the *Peacock*." This praise is worth more than a victory.

The *Hornet* received but a slight injury; the number of killed and wounded, on board the *Peacock*, could not be exactly ascertained, but was supposed to exceed fifty. The officers mentioned, as having distinguished themselves on this occasion, were lieutenants Conner and Newton, and midshipmen Cooper, Mayo, Getz, Smoot, Tippet, Bœrum and Titus. Lieutenant Stewart was unfortunately too ill to take a part in the action.

On the tenth of April, a few days after the arrival of the *Hornet*, the *Chesapeake*, that "ill-omened bark," returned to Boston, after a cruise of four months. Her commander, captain Evans, having been appointed to the New-York station, she was assigned to captain Lawrence.

The British, whose mortification at their repeated defeats may be easily imagined, and who regarded the reputation of their navy as their great bulwark, had become seriously alarmed. If the charm of their fancied superiority on this element were once destroyed, other nations, who had now yielded to them the palm, might conceive the idea of conquering also. A fearful example was set to the European world by America. In some recent rencounters, even the French, who had been so unfortunate in their naval combats with the British, had begun to pluck up courage. Something must be done to retrieve their naval character, or all their naval songs must be burnt, and their naval boasts must be at an end. A course was naturally fallen upon of selecting one of their best frigates,

manned by picked seamen, and exercised with all possible pains, for the special purpose. They deigned to copy every thing which in reality, or which they fancied, prevailed in the American ships. There was an idle insinuation, that American backwoods-men were placed in the tops for the purpose of shooting the officers. Sharp-shooters were now carefully trained, and directed to aim only at the officers of the Americans. Thus provided with a chosen ship, and picked seamen, captain Brooke appeared with the Shannon on the American coast. In April, off Boston harbour, he sent a bravado to the President, commodore Rodgers, who happened to be there. On the twenty-third, this vessel, with the Congress, captain Smith, sailed on a cruise; but the Shannon, then in company with the Tenedos, either intentionally avoided them, or by accident happened to be out of the way. The Shannon sometime afterwards returned, and sent a formal challenge to captain Lawrence, who had just taken the command; this was unfortunately not received by him.

We are now to relate an occurrence which imparts a melancholy tinge to our naval chronicle, thus far so brilliant; an occurrence in which uncontrollable fortune had the largest share; but in the midst of visitations which fill our hearts with sorrow, we shall find matter of consolation, almost a recompense for our misfortune. Captain Lawrence, on arriving to take command of this ship, was informed that a British frigate was lying before the harbour, apparently courting a combat with an American. Listening only to the dictates of his generous nature, he burned with impatience to meet the enemy, and unfortunately did not sufficiently pause to examine whether the terms were equal. The greater part of the Chesapeake's crew had been discharged, others to supply their places were enlisted, several of his officers were sick, and that kind of mutual confidence, arising from a knowledge of each other, was wanting between himself and his men. But he could not brook the thought of being thus defied. On the first of June he sailed forth, resolved to try his fortune. When he came in sight of the Shannon, he made a short address to his crew, but found it received with no enthusiasm; they murmured, alleging as the cause

of complaint, that their prize money had not been paid; he immediately gave them tickets for it, and thought they were now reconciled; but, unfortunately, they were at this moment almost in a state of mutiny. Several foreigners, who had accidentally found their way into the crew, had succeeded in poisoning their minds. The brave Lawrence, consulted his own heart, and looked only to the enemy without, and not to the enemy within.

The Shannon, observing the Chesapeake, put to sea, and was followed by her. At half past five, the Chesapeake closed with the enemy, gave him a broadside, which was returned, equally destructive on both sides; but the Chesapeake was particularly unfortunate in the loss of officers, the sailing master, White, was killed; lieutenant Ballard, mortally wounded; lieutenant Brown, of the marines, and captain Lawrence, himself, severely wounded: the latter leaned on the companion-way, although in great pain, and still continued to give orders. A second and a third broadside were exchanged, with evident advantage on the side of the Chesapeake, but the same misfortune in loss of officers continued; the first lieutenant, Ludlow, was carried below severely wounded; three men were successively shot from the wheel; a shot disabled her foresail, so that she could no longer answer her helm. Being disabled in her rigging, the Chesapeake then fell with her quarter on the Shannon's anchor. This accident may be considered as having decided the contest; an opportunity was then given of raking the Chesapeake, and, towards the close of the action, of boarding. Captain Lawrence, although severely wounded, still persisted in keeping the deck, now commanded the boarders to be called up; at this moment a musket-ball entered his body, and he was carried below, having first pronounced these memorable words, which have become the motto of the American navy, **DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP.** The officers of the Chesapeake were nearly all killed, and the command devolved on lieutenant Budd, who called up the men for the purpose of carrying the order of Lawrence into execution. At this time captain Brooke, finding that his vessel had received so many shots between wind and water, that there was danger

of her sinking, and perceiving the confusion which reigned on board the American, and yet fearful that victory might slip from his grasp, threw twenty of his marines on board, and immediately followed them. Lieutenant Budd endeavoured to shoot the vessel clear of the Shannon; but being soon after wounded, and a part of the crew in a state of mutiny, the scheme entirely failed. A number, however, still continued to fight with unalterable resolution: captain Brooke received a wound in the head, and was carried on board his own ship. Lieutenant Watt, who now commanded the enemy, was shot; but a large reinforcement coming to their assistance they gained possession of the deck, and soon after hoisted the English flag.

In this sanguinary conflict, twenty-three of the enemy were killed; and fifty-six wounded: among the killed, her first lieutenant, her clerk, and purser, and amongst the wounded her captain. On board the Chesapeake, the captain, the first and fourth lieutenants, the lieutenant of marines, the master, the midshipmen Hopewell, Livingston, Evans, and about seventy men killed; and the second and third lieutenants, the chaplain, midshipmen Weaver, Abbot, Nicholls, Berry, and about eighty men wounded. The greater proportion of this loss was sustained after the enemy had gained the deck. The British have been charged with a cruel and ungenerous conduct towards the vanquished. We could wish that this charge had been properly repelled, if not true. It is said that after the Americans had submitted, they continued the work of destruction, and that the treatment to the prisoners was not of that liberal kind which might have been expected from manly generosity. The liberality of their subsequent conduct, leads us to wish that no such complaints could be made against them. The bodies of our naval heroes, Lawrence and Ludlow, on their arrival at Halifax, were interred with every honour, civil, naval and military, which they could bestow, and no testimony of respect that was due to their memories was left unpaid. They were afterwards brought to the United States, by Mr. Crowningshield of Boston, who obtained a passport from commodore Hardy for the purpose, in a

vessel manned by twelve masters of vessels, who volunteered their services on the occasion.

The loss of the Chesapeake has been justly attributed to the accident of her falling on board the Shannon, and to the mutinous state of her crew. She was somewhat inferior in force also, but this ought not be taken into consideration; for until the fatal accident, the advantage was decidedly in her favour. However this may be, we can spare to Great Britain this victory, as some slight consolation for her former and subsequent drubbings. And never did any victory produce such extravagant rejoicing. Not the land victories of Wellington in Spain, nor even the victories of Nelson, called forth such expressions of satisfaction; a proof that our naval character had risen somewhat in her estimation. In the United States it was regarded as an accident, which proved no superiority on the part of the British, and it was lamented chiefly for the loss of our brave officers.

The tide of fortune seemed for a short time in favour of Great Britain. On the fourth of August, another of our national vessels was captured by the enemy. The *Argus*, after carrying out Mr. Crawford; our minister to France, in the spring of 1813, proceeded, early in June, to cruise in the British channel, where she continued for two months to commit great havock on the British shipping. So much uneasiness did she cause, that the English merchants were unable to effect an insurance on their vessels, under three times the usual premium. The British government was induced, at last, to send several vessels on purpose to chase off this daring enemy. On the fourteenth, at four in the morning, the *Pelican*, a sloop of war, of considerably greater force than the *Argus*, obtained a sight of her by the light of a brig which the latter had set on fire. The *Argus* immediately prepared to receive the enemy; at five o'clock the action commenced at the distance of musket shot, the *Pelican* having the weather gage. At the first broadside captain Allen fell, severely wounded, but remained on deck until several broadsides were exchanged when he was carried below, leaving the command to lieutenant Watson. At half past six, the rigging of the *Argus* was so cut up, as to render

her almost unmanageable; the lieutenant was severely wounded in the head, and the command devolved on William H. Allen, jun. who for some time, with great exertions, defeated the attempts of the Pelican to gain a raking position. At thirty-five minutes past six, the Argus having lost her wheel ropes, and running rigging, could no longer be manœuvred, and the Pelican chose a position in which none of the guns of the Argus could be brought to bear upon her; she had nothing to oppose to repeated raking broadsides, but musketry. At forty-seven minutes past six she surrendered, with the loss of six killed and seventeen wounded; on board the Pelican there were three killed, and five wounded. Captain Allen died soon after in England, together with midshipmen Delphy and Edwards, and they were all interred with the honours of war. The Pelican was a sloop of twenty guns, the Argus of eighteen, but the victory in this instance may be fairly awarded to the English. Our officers and men did their duty, but were compelled to submit to a more fortunate adversary. Captain Allen was justly a favourite in this country, and his death on this occasion only served to render his memory the more dear to his countrymen. To put our ingenuity to the rack in finding excuses for this defeat, would be but to imitate the British, who have not allowed us a *single fair naval victory*, out of at least twenty instances, in which their national flag has struck to ours. If accidents may happen in twenty successive cases, why may they not happen in one or two; but we do not regard them as such.

By letters dated early in July, news reached the United States from captain Porter, who had captured several British vessels in the South Seas, and was then cruising with great success, his crew in fine health. He had actually created a fleet, of nine sail, by means of vessels captured on those seas, eight of which had been letters of marque; and he was at this time completely master of the Pacific ocean. This may be regarded as a novelty in naval incidents; and there is no doubt, had it been performed by an English naval commander, it would have been applauded to the skies, but in an American it was the deportment of a buccanier. By none of our com-

manders has there been so much injury done to British commerce; against none of them have they been so profuse in their invective. On the list of his captures were two fine English ships, pierced for twenty guns, and carrying between them sixteen; with fifty-five men, and on board a considerable sum in specie. On the twenty-sixth of March, he fell in with a Spanish ship, the *Nereyda*, which had been engaged in capturing American ships; he took the liberty of throwing her guns overboard, and liberating the ships and prisoners, the pirate had captured. This is probably one of the grounds upon which commodore Porter has been charged with the conduct of a buccanier.

The British were not long permitted to rejoice in the conquest of the *Argus*; victory once more returned to the side of justice, "free trade and sailors' rights." The brig *Enterprize*, lieutenant William Burrows, sailed from Portsmouth on a cruise, about the first of September. On the fifth, a large man of war brig was discovered, to which he gave chase. The enemy, after firing several guns, stood for the *Enterprize* with several ensigns hoisted. She proved to be the *Boxer*, of force somewhat superior to the *Enterprize*. At twenty minutes after three, the firing commenced on both sides, within pistol shot. After the action had continued fifteen minutes the *Enterprize* ranged ahead, and raked her, which she continued for twenty minutes, when the enemy ceased firing, and cried for quarter, being unable to haul down her flag, as it had been nailed to the mast. The *Enterprize* had one killed and thirteen wounded, but that one was the lamented Burrows. He fell at the commencement of the action, and refused to quit the deck, but raising his head, with a noble spirit, he requested that the flag might never be struck. When the sword of the enemy was presented to him, he exclaimed with enthusiasm, clasping it to his breast, "I die contented;" and not till then would he permit himself to be carried below. Who will say that such a death is not truly heroick? while such a spirit resides in the breasts of our seamen, they may indeed be called invincibles; their bodies may be subdued, but their souls never can. The British loss was much more con-

siderable, but not properly ascertained; it is supposed however, that between thirty and forty killed and wounded, among the former her commander, captain Blythe. The bravado of nailing the flag to the mast, is an additional proof of the terrour in which the Americans were now held by the enemy, which before affected to despise them. The contrivance of nailing the flag, was probably borrowed from the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses caused himself to be bound to the mast, that he might escape the song of the Syrens, which even his great wisdom could not withstand.

The two commanders, both promising young men, were interred beside each other at Portland, with military honours. The British, as usual, set themselves to work to detract from the honours of this victory.

On the twenty-sixth of September, the President, commodore Rodgers, arrived at Newport, Rhode-Island, after a cruise of unusual length. He put to sea on the thirtieth of April, in company with the Congress, captain Smith. After cruising off our coast without any important occurrence, they parted on the eighth of May, and the commodore shaped his course to intercept the British West India trade; but meeting with nothing in this quarter, he stood towards the Azores, where he continued until the sixth of June, without meeting any of the enemy's vessels. From information which he now received, he shaped his course to intercept the convoy from the West Indies to England. In this he was not successful, but made four captures, between the ninth and thirteenth of June. He next cruised in the track from Newfoundland to St. George's channel, but without meeting a single vessel; being short of provisions, he put into North Bergen on the twenty-seventh of June. He thence steered towards the Orkneys, to intercept a convoy from Archangel; but about the middle of July, when in momentary expectation of meeting with it, he was chased by a ship of the line and a frigate, for several days, owing to the lightness of the winds. He next steered to gain the direction of the trade passing out and into the Irish channel. In this position he made three captures; but finding that the enemy had a superiour force near this, he made a circuit round Ire-

land, and then steered for the banks of Newfoundland, where he made two captures. On the twenty-third of September, he captured, in a singular manner, the British schooner *Highflyer*, tender to admiral Warren; on her approach to the President, she hoisted a private signal, which was accidentally answered by one that proved to be the British signal for that day; she accordingly bore down and was captured. By this means the British private signals, and admiral Warren's private instructions, were obtained, and which enabled the commodore to avoid their squadrons on the coast. He soon after arrived at Newport.

The Congress, after parting from the President, continued her cruise until the twelfth of December, when she arrived at Portsmouth, New-Hampshire. She had cruised chiefly on the coast of South America, and had captured a number of the enemy's vessels, amongst others two armed brigs of ten guns each.

It has already been said, that the character of our flag at sea, was not merely supported by our national vessels; there were numerous instances in which our private cruisers acquitted themselves in a manner to gratify the pride of any people. But the publick attention was so much occupied with the first, that the latter perhaps has not received a due share of applause. A few instances may be selected from amongst a number. Perhaps no action during the war displayed more daring courage, and wonderful superiority of seamanship, than the engagement of the *Comet*, captain Boyle, with a Portuguese brig, and three armed merchantmen. After engaging them all four, and fighting them several hours, he compelled one of the merchantmen to surrender, and the brig to sheer off, although double the force of the *Comet*. This would appear almost incredible, if the details were not perfectly satisfactory.

On the eleventh of March, the General Armstrong, off Surinam, discovered a sail which she supposed to be a letter of marque, and after giving her a broadside, and wearing to give another, to their surprise they found they were along side of a frigate, which soon opened such a

heavy fire, as would have sunk the schooner, had she not succeeded in making her escape.

On the fifteenth of August, the privateer *Decatur*, being on a cruise, discovered a ship and schooner; the first proved to be the British packet, the *Princess Charlotte*, the other the British vessel of war, the *Dominica*. She immediately stood towards them, and soon found herself abreast of the schooner. Both vessels continued to manœuvre for two or three hours, the *Dominica* endeavouring to escape, and the *Decatur* to board; during which time several broadsides were fired by the former, and some shot from the large gun of the latter. The *Decatur* at last succeeded in boarding, a number of her men passing by means of her bowsprit into the stern of the other. The fire from the artillery and musketry was now terrible, being well supported on both sides. The *Dominica* not being able to disengage herself, dropped along side of the *Decatur*, and was thus boarded by her whole crew. Fire arms now became useless, and the crews fought hand to hand, with cutlasses and cold shot. The officers of the *Dominica* being all killed and wounded, she was forced to surrender. As soon as the combat was over, the *Princess Charlotte* tacked about, and escaped.

The *Decatur* was armed with six twelve-pound carronades, and one eighteen pounder on a pivot, with one hundred and three men. Her loss was three killed and sixteen wounded. The *Dominica* had twelve twelve-pound carronades, two long sixes, and one brass four-pounder, and one thirty-two pound carronade on a pivot, with eighty-three men. She had thirteen killed, and forty-seven wounded. The surviving officers of the *Dominica* attributed the loss of their vessel to the superiour skill of the *Decatur's* crew in the use of musketry, and the masterly manœuvring of that vessel, by which their carriage guns were rendered useless. The captain had been a young man of about twenty-five years of age; he was wounded early in the action; but he fought to the last moment, declaring that he would only surrender his vessel with his life.

The *Decatur* arrived at Charlestown with her prize on the twentieth of August. It is pleasing to record, that in

this instance our brave tars did not depart from their accustomed generosity. The surviving officers of the *Dominica* spoke in the highest terms of the humanity and attention which they experienced from the victors.

CHAPTER X.

Affairs of the West—Patriotick conduct of Ohio and Kentucky—Defence of Sandusky—Generosity of the Americans—Naval preparations on Lake Erie—Commodore Perry sails with his fleet—Capture of the enemy's squadron—Battle of the Thames, and death of Tecumseh—Correspondence between general Harrison and general Vincent.

IN the midst of the various occurrences of the war, on the northern frontier, on the sea-board, and on the ocean, important preparations were making to the westward; and although the spring and summer had passed away, without any incident in this quarter worthy of being recorded, they had not passed inactive. The general attention was now turned towards it with much anxiety, and the armies of the Niagara and St. Lawrence, remained almost with folded arms, awaiting the issue of Harrison's campaign, and the result of the contest for the mastership of lake Erie. The British, aware of the consequence of a defeat, had with great assiduity laboured to strengthen themselves. The reinforcements continually arriving at fort George, were evidently destined to follow up the advantages which Proctor might gain, in conjunction with the commander on the lake. In the meanwhile, in the neighbouring states of Kentucky and Ohio, the people were excited in a most surprising degree; had it been necessary they would have risen *en masse*; almost every man capable of bearing a musket, was anxious to march. The governour of Ohio had scarcely issued his proclamation, calling on volunteers, (for the obligations of law to render military service were no longer thought of,) than fifteen thousand men present-

ed themselves, completely armed and equipped—more than five times the number required. The venerable governor of Kentucky, Shelby, a revolutionary hero, and the Nestor of the present war, made it known that he would put himself at the head of the injured citizens of that state, and lead them to seek revenge for the murder of their relatives and friends; but limited the number of volunteers to four thousand. The state of Kentucky, called by the natives, “the dark and bloody ground,” forty years ago was an uninhabited forest, possessed by no tribe of Indians; but from time immemorial the theatre of sanguinary wars. At this day, it blooms beneath the hand of agriculture, it is filled with beautiful towns and villages; and is the abode of peace, opulence and refinement. The inhabitants are descended from the planters of Virginia and North Carolina, and emigrants, composed of the enterprising and intelligent of the other states. Living in abundance and at their ease, and more remote from the seats of commerce, they have imbibed less of foreign attachments or feelings, than any of our people; and are perhaps more enthusiastically devoted to the institutions of freedom. They have not a little of the manners of chivalry in their generous and hospitable deportment. Fearless of danger, regarding dishonour more than death, but with these qualities, a benevolence and humanity, which has scarcely a parallel. Had the elder brethren of our confederacy acted like this younger member, the Canadas would have been ours, and Britain would never have dared to insult us with her unwarrantable pretensions.

The transactions which are now to be related, may justly rank amongst the most pleasing to our feelings and national pride, of any which took place during the contest. The campaign opened with an affair, which, though comparatively of smaller consequence than some others, is in its circumstances one of the most brilliant that occurred during the war. This was the unparalleled defence of fort Sandusky, by a youth of twenty-one years of age. In August, and before the arrival of the Ohio and Kentucky volunteers, which did not take place until the following month, threatening movements had been made upon all the different forts, established by the Ame-

ricans on the rivers which fall into lake Erie. After the siege of fort Meigs, the British had been considerably reinforced by regulars, and an unusual number of Indians, under their great leader Tecumseh. It was all-important to reduce these forts before the arrival of the volunteers. Major Croghan, then commanding at Upper Sandusky, having received intimation that the enemy were about to invest the fort of Lower Sandusky, had marched to this place with some additional force, and had been occupied with great assiduity in placing it in the best posture of defence. But the only addition of importance, which the time would allow him to make, was a ditch of six feet deep and nine feet wide, outside the stockade of pickets, by which these hastily constructed forts are enclosed, but which can afford but a weak defence against artillery. He had but one six pounder, and about one hundred and sixty men, consisting of regulars, and detachments of the Pittsburgh and Petersburg volunteers. General Harrison, not conceiving it practicable to defend the place, ordered young Croghan to retire on the approach of the enemy, after having destroyed the works. This our young hero, taking the responsibility upon himself, determined to disobey.

On the first of August, general Proctor, having left a large body of Indians under Tecumseh, to keep up the appearance of a siege of fort Meigs, arrived at Sandusky with about five hundred regulars, seven hundred Indians, and some gunboats. After the general had made such dispositions of his troops, as to cut off the retreat of the garrison, he sent a flag by colonel Elliot and major Chambers, demanding a surrender, accompanied with the usual base and detestable threats of butchery and cold blood massacre, if the garrison should hold out. A spirited answer was returned by Croghan, who found that all his companions, chiefly striplings like himself, would support him to the last.

When the flag returned, a brisk fire was opened from the gunboats and a howitzer, and which was kept up during the night. In the morning, they opened with three sixes, which had been planted under cover of the night, within two hundred and fifty yards of the pickets,

but not with much effect. About four o'clock in the afternoon, it was discovered that the enemy had concentrated his fire against the northwest angle, with the intention of making a breach. This part was immediately strengthened by the apposition of bags of flour and sand, so that the pickets suffered but little injury. During this time, the six pounder was carefully concealed in the bastion, which covered the point to be assailed, and it was loaded with slugs and grape. About five hundred of the enemy now advanced in close column to assail the part where it was supposed the pickets must have been injured: at the same time making several feints, to draw the attention of the besieged to other parts of the fort: their force being thus divided, a column of three hundred and fifty men, which were so enveloped in smoke as not to be seen until they approached within twenty paces of the lines, advanced rapidly to the assault. A fire of musketry from the fort, for a moment threw them into confusion, but were then quickly rallied by colonel Short, their commander, who, now springing over the outer works into the ditch, commanded the rest to follow, crying out, "give the d——d Yankees no quarter!" Scarcely had these detestable words escaped his lips, and the greater part of his followers landed in the ditch, when the six pounder opened upon them a most destructive fire, killing and wounding the greater part, and amongst the first, the wretched leader, who was sent into eternity, before his words had died upon the air. A volley of musketry was, at the same time, fired upon those who had not ventured. The officer who succeeded Short, exasperated at being thus treated by a few boys, formed his broken column, and again rushed to the ditch, where he, and those who dared to follow him, met with the same fate as their fellow soldiers. The small arms were again played on them, the whole British force was thrown into confusion, and in spite of the exertions of their officers, fled to the woods, almost panick struck, whither they were soon followed by the Indians. Thus were these men, confident of success, and detestable in the intended use of victory, most signally chastised, under Providence, by a force scarce a tenth of their numbers. Terrour inde-

scribable took possession of the assailants, and they retreated towards their boats, scarcely daring to cast their eyes towards the fatal spot, while they were followed by their allies in sullen silence.

If this gallant defence deserves the applause of the brave, the subsequent conduct of the besieged deserves the praise of every friend of humanity. The scene which now ensued, deserves to be denominated sublime. The little band, forgetting in a moment that they had been assailed by merciless foes, who sought to massacre them, without regarding the laws of honourable war, now felt only the desire of relieving wounded men, and of administering comfort to the wretched. Had they been friends, had they been brothers, they could not have experienced a more tender solicitude. The whole night was occupied in endeavouring to assuage their sufferings; provisions and buckets of water were handed over the pickets, and an opening was made, by which many of the sufferers were taken in, who were immediately supplied with surgical aid; and this, although a firing was kept up with small arms by the enemy, until some time in the night. The loss of the garrison amounted to one killed and seven wounded; that of the enemy, it is supposed, to at least two hundred. Upwards of fifty were found in and about the ditch. It was discovered next morning, that the enemy had hastily retreated, leaving a boat and a considerable quantity of military stores. Upwards of seventy stand of arms were taken, besides a quantity of ammunition. The Americans were engaged during the day, in burying the dead with the honours of war, and providing for the wounded.

This exploit called forth the admiration of every party in the United States. Croghan, together with his companions, captain Hunter, and lieutenants Johnson, Bayley, and Meeks, of the seventeenth; Anthony, of the twenty-fourth; and ensigns Ship and Duncan, of the seventeenth, together with the other officers and volunteers, were highly complimented by the general. They afterwards received the thanks of congress. Croghan was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, and was presented with an elegant sword by the ladies of Chillicothe.

Soon after this affair Tecumseh raised the siege of fort Meigs, and followed Proctor to Detroit; all hope was given up by the enemy of reducing these forts, until they could gain the ascendancy on the lake.

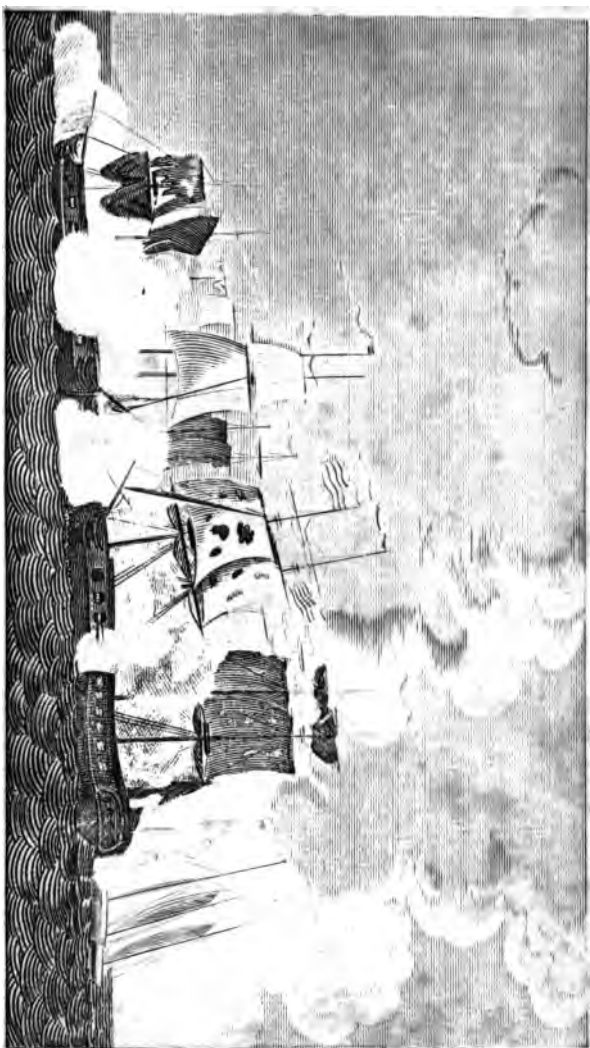
The utmost exertions had been made in the meanwhile, by captain Perry, to complete the naval armament on lake Erie. By the fourth of August, the fleet was completed; but several of the vessels were with difficulty got over the bar, on which there are but five feet water. He sailed in quest of the enemy, but not meeting him, returned on the eighth, and after receiving a reinforcement of sailors, brought by captain Elliot, sailed again on the twelfth, and on the fifteenth anchored in the bay of Sandusky. Here, after taking in about twenty volunteer marines, he again went in quest of the enemy; and after cruising off Malden, returned to Put-in-Bay, a distance of thirty miles. His fleet consisted of the brig Lawrence, of twenty guns; the Niagara, captain Elliot, of twenty; the Caledonia, lieutenant Turner, three; the schooner Ariel, of four; the Scorpion, of two; the Somers, of two, and two swivels; the sloop Trippe, and schooners Tygress and Porcupine, of one gun each; making a fleet of nine vessels and fifty-four guns. On the morning of the tenth of September, the enemy was discovered bearing down upon the American squadron, which immediately got under weigh, and stood out to meet him. The superiority was decidedly in favour of the British; the Americans had three more vessels, but this was much more than counterbalanced by the size of those of the enemy, and the number of their guns. Their fleet consisted of the Detroit, captain Barclay, of nineteen guns, and two howitzers; the Queen Charlotte, of seventeen guns, captain Finnis; the schooner Lady Prevost, lieutenant Buchan, of thirteen guns, and two howitzers; the brig Hunter, of ten guns; the sloop Little Belt, of three; and the schooner Chippewa, of one gun and two swivels; in all six vessels and sixty-three guns.

When the Americans stood out, the British fleet had the weather gage; but the wind soon after changed, and brought the American fleet to windward. The line of battle was formed at eleven, and at fifteen minutes be-

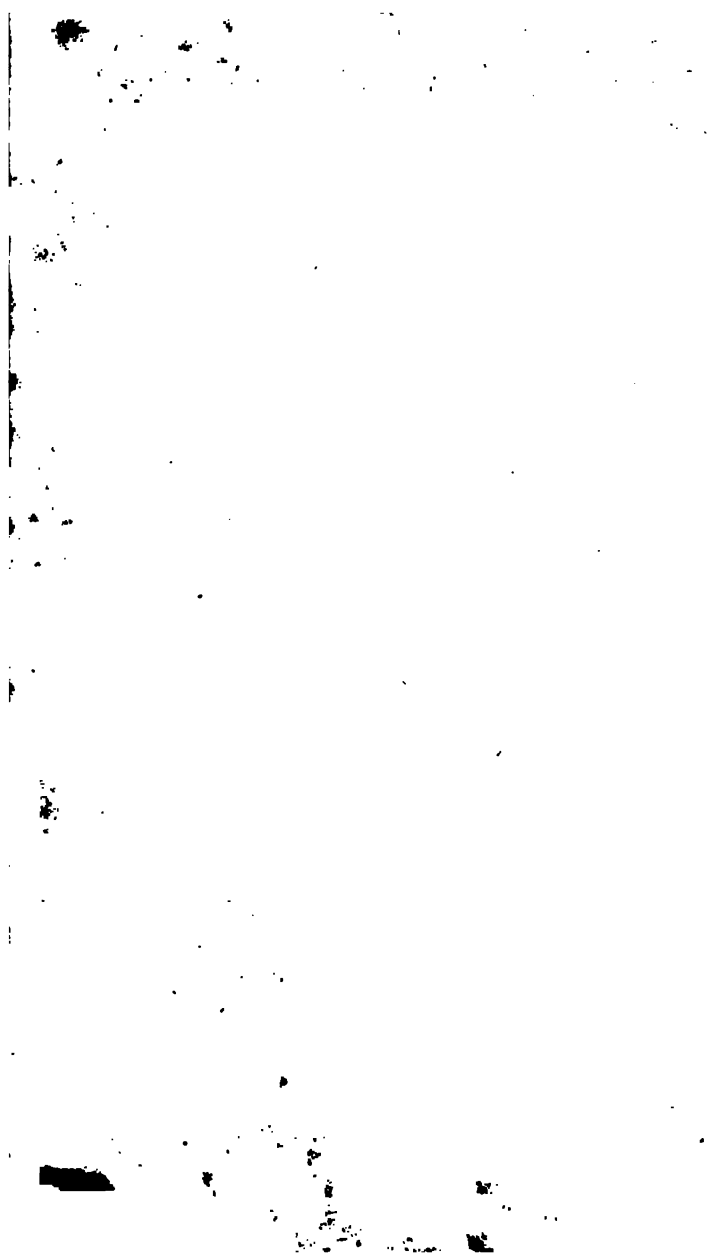
fore twelve, the enemy's flag ship, the *Queen Charlotte*, opened her fire upon the *Lawrence*, which she sustained for ten minutes, before she could approach near enough for her carronades to return. She therefore bore up, making signals for the other vessels to hasten to her support, and about twelve, brought her guns to bear upon the enemy. Unfortunately, the wind being too light, the remainder of the squadron could not be brought up to her assistance, and she was compelled to contend, for two hours, with two ships of equal force. The contest was, notwithstanding, kept up with unshaken courage, and a degree of coolness which deserves the highest admiration. By this time the brig, which had so long borne the brunt of the whole of the British force, had become entirely unmanageable; every gun was dismounted, and, with the exception of four or five, her whole crew either killed or wounded. Perry now, with admirable presence of mind, and which drew forth the praise of the gallant officer to whom he was opposed; resolved to shift his flag, leaped into his boat, and heroically waving his sword, passed unhurt to the *Niagara*. At the moment he reached the *Niagara*, he saw with anguish the flag of his ship come down; she was utterly unable to make further resistance, and it would have been a wanton waste of the remaining lives, to continue the contest; the enemy was not able to take possession of her. Captain Elliott, seconding the design of the commodore, volunteered to bring up the rest of the fleet; for at this critical moment the wind had providentially increased. Perry now bore down upon the enemy with a fresh ship; and passing ahead of the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, and *Lady Prevost*, poured a destructive broadside into each from his starboard, and from his larboard into the *Chippewa* and *Little Belt*. In this manner cutting through the line, he was within pistol shot of the *Lady Prevost*, which received so heavy a fire as to compel her men to run below. At this moment the *Caledonia* came up, and opened her fire; several others of the squadron were enabled soon after to do the same. For a time, this novel and important combat mingled with indescribable violence and fury. The issue of a campaign, the mastery of a sea, the glory and re-

noun of two rival nations, matched for the first time in squadron, where the incentives to the contest. But it was not long before the scale turned in favour of Perry, and his ship, the *Lawrence*, was again enabled to hoist her flag. The *Queen Charlotte*, having lost her captain and all the principal officers, by some mischance ran foul of the *Detroit*, and the greater part of the guns of both ships were rendered useless. They were now compelled to sustain, in turn, an incessant fire from the *Niagara*, and the other vessels of the squadron. The flag of captain Barclay was soon after struck, and those of the *Queen Charlotte*, the *Lady Prevost*, the *Hunter*, and the *Chippewa*, came down in succession: the *Little Belt* attempted to escape, but was pursued by two gunboats and captured.

Thus, after a contest of three hours, was this unparalleled naval victory achieved, in which every vessel of the enemy was captured, the first occurrence of the kind ever recorded. If any thing could heighten this glorious victory, it was the modest yet sublime manner in which it was announced by the incomparable Perry; WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY, AND THEY ARE OURS. Britain had been beaten in single combat; she was now beaten in squadron, where she had conceived herself invincible. The loss in this bloody affair, was very great in proportion to the numbers engaged. The Americans had twenty-seven killed and ninety-six wounded; amongst the first, were lieutenant Brooks, of the marines, and midshipmen Laub; amongst the latter, were lieutenant Yarnell, sailing-master Taylor, purser Hamilton, and midshipmen Claxton and Swartwout. The loss of the British was about two hundred in killed and wounded, and the number of prisoners amounted to six hundred, exceeding the whole number of the Americans. Commodore Barclay, a gallant officer, who had lost an arm at the battle of Trafalgar, was severely wounded, and the loss of officers, on the side of the British, was unusually great. Among the officers particularly spoken of on this occasion, were captain Elliot, lieutenants Turner, Edwards, Forest, Clark, and Cummings, besides those already mentioned.



PERKINS' VICTORY



Never was any event received with such unbounded demonstrations of joy. All party feelings were for a moment forgotten, and this glorious occurrence celebrated by illuminations and festivals, from one end of the continent to the other.

It is highly gratifying to know, that the treatment of the British prisoners was such, as to call forth their thanks. Captain Barclay declared, that "the conduct of commodore Perry towards the captive officers and men, was sufficient, of itself, to immortalize him."

We were now masters of the lake; but our territory was still in the possession of Proctor. The next movement would be against the British and Indians at Detroit and at Malden. General Harrison called on a portion of the Ohio militia, which had been embodied; and on the seventh, four thousand Kentuckians, the flower of the state, with their venerable governour, Isaac Shelby, the hero of king's mountain, at their head, arrived at Harrison's camp. With the co-operation of the fleet, it was determined to proceed at once to Malden: and at the same moment, colonel Johnson was ordered to proceed with a body of Kentuckians to Detroit. These accordingly marched; but on approaching the river Raisin, where those scenes of horror had been acted, they halted sometime to contemplate the tragick spot. The feelings which they experienced on this occasion, cannot be described; many of them had lost their friends and relations, whose bones they now gathered up, after in vain attempting to distinguish them; and therefore consigned them to a common grave, with the most affecting demonstrations of grief.

On the twenty-seventh, the troops were received on board, and on the same day reached a point below Malden. The British general had in the meanwhile destroyed the fort and publick stores, and had retreated along the Thames, towards the Moravian villages, together with Tecumseh's Indians. A number of females came out to implore the protection of the American general, as though it had been necessary: general Harrison had given orders that even Proctor, if taken, should not be hurt; nay the dwelling of the obnoxious Elliot, was not even touched

by the magnanimous Kentuckians, who had been represented by Proctor as savages.

It was now resolved by Harrison and Shelby, to proceed immediately in pursuit of Proctor. On the second of October, they marched with about three thousand five hundred men, selected for the purpose, consisting of colonel Ball's dragoons, colonel Johnson's regiment, and other detachments of governor Shelby's volunteers. The heroick Perry accompanied general Harrison, as a volunteer aid. They moved with such rapidity, that they encamped the first day at the distance of twenty-six miles. The next day they captured a guard, by whom they learned that Proctor was not aware of their approach, but had sent to destroy the bridges. On the fourth, they were detained some time by a deep creek, the bridge over which had been partly destroyed; and a number of Indians commenced an attack from the opposite bank, but were dispersed by colonel Johnson, and the artillery of major Wood, while the bridge was repaired. On the other side, they captured two thousand stand of arms; the houses containing the enemy's publick stores, together with several vessels were on fire. On the fifth, the pursuit was renewed, when, after capturing some property to a considerable amount, they reached the place where the enemy had encamped the night before. Colonel Johnson was sent forward, to reconnoitre the British and Indian forces; and he very soon returned with information, that they had made a stand a few miles distant, and were ready for action. They were drawn up across a narrow strip of land, covered with beach trees, and hemmed in on one side by a swamp, and on the other by the river; their left rested on the river, supported by their artillery; and their right consisted of the Indians under Tecumseh, who occupied the more dense forest in the vicinity of the morass.

The American troops were now formed in order of battle. General Trotter's brigade formed the front line, with general Desha's division *en potence* on the left. General King's brigade formed a second line, in the rear of general Trotter, and Chile's, as a corps of reserve; both under the command of major-general Henry. Each

brigade averaged five hundred men. The angle formed by Desha's brigade and Trotter's, was occupied by the venerable Shelby. The regular troops, amounting to one hundred and twenty men, were formed in columns, occupying a narrow space between the road and the river, for the purpose of seizing the artillery, should the enemy be repulsed. General Harrison had at first ordered colonel Johnson's mounted men to form in two lines, in front of the Indians; but the underwood being too close here for cavalry to act with any effect, he determined upon a mode of attack altogether new. Knowing the dexterity of the backwood's-men in riding through forests, and the little inconvenience to them of carrying their rifles in such a situation, he determined to refuse his left to the Indians, and charge on the regulars drawn up among the beech trees; the mounted regiment was accordingly drawn up in front. The army moved on but a short distance in this way, when the mounted men received the enemy's fire, and were instantly ordered to charge. The horses, in front of the column, at first recoiled from the fire; but soon after got in motion, and immediately at full speed broke through the enemy with irresistible force. In one minute the contest was over in front. The mounted men instantly formed in the rear, and poured a destructive fire, and were about to make another charge, when the British officers, finding it impossible to form their broken ranks, immediately surrendered.

Upon the left, the onset was begun by Tecumseh with great fury. Colonel R. M. Johnson, who commanded on that flank of his regiment, received a galling fire, which he returned with effect, while the Indians advanced towards the point occupied by governor Shelby; and at first made an impression on it; but the aged warrior brought a regiment to its support. The combat now raged with increasing fury; the Indians to the number of twelve or fifteen hundred, seemed determined to maintain their ground to the last. The terrible voice of Tecumseh could be distinctly heard, encouraging his warriors; and although beset on every side, excepting on that of the morass, they fought with more determined courage than had ever been witnessed in these people:

An incident soon occurred, however, which decided the contest. Colonel Johnson rushed towards the spot where the warriors, clustering around their undaunted chief, appeared resolved to perish by his side; in a moment a hundred rifles were aimed at the American, whose uniform and white horse which he rode rendered a conspicuous object; his holsters, dress, and accoutrements, were pierced with bullets, his horse and himself receiving a number of wounds. At the instant his horse was about to sink under him, the daring Kentuckian, covered with blood from his wounds, was discovered by Tecumseh; the chief having discharged his rifle, sprang forward with his tomahawk, but struck with the appearance of the warrior who stood before him, hesitated for a moment, and that moment was his last. The Kentuckian levelled a pistol at his breast, and they both, almost at the same instant, fell to the ground.* The Kentuckians rushed forward to the rescue of their leader, and the Indians, no longer hearing the voice of Tecumseh, soon after fled. Near the spot where this scene occurred, thirty Indians were found dead, and six whites.

Thus fell Tecumseh, the most celebrated Indian warrior that ever raised the tomahawk against us, and with him fell the last hope of our Indian enemies. This mighty warrior was the determined foe of civilization, and had for years been labouring to unite all the Indian tribes in opposing the progress of the settlements to the westward. Had such a man opposed the European colonists on their first arrival, this continent, in all probability, would still have been a wilderness. To those who prefer a savage, uncultivated waste inhabited by wolves and panthers, and by men more savage still, to the busy city, to the peaceful hamlet and cottage, to science and the comforts of civilization, to such it may be a source of regret that Tecumseh came too late. But if the cultivation of the earth, and the cultivation of the human intellect and the human virtues, are agreeable in the sight of

* Colonel Johnson is still a member of congress. In this affair I have adopted the popular story: but I am aware that it has been denied the Indian killed by colonel Johnson was Tecumseh. Until it shall be formally denied by him, I shall think it my duty to relate the story as I find it.

CHARGE OF THE 4TH REG'T.






the Creator, it may be a just cause of felicitation that this champion of barbarism was the ally of Great Britain, at a period, when he could only draw down destruction on his own head, by savagely daring what was beyond his strength. But Tecumseh fell respected by his enemies, as a great and a magnanimous chief. Although he seldom took prisoners in battle, he treated well those that had been taken by others; and, at the defeat of Dudley, actually put to death a chief whom he found engaged in the work of massacre. He had been in almost every engagement with the whites since Harmer's defeat, although at his death, he scarcely exceeded forty years of age. Tecumseh had received the stamp of greatness from the hand of nature, and had his lot been cast in a different state of society, he would have shone as one of the most distinguished of men. He was endowed with a powerful mind, with the soul of a hero. There was an uncommon dignity in his countenance and manners; by the former he could be easily discovered even after death, among the rest of the slain, for he wore no insignia of distinction. When girded with a silk sash, and told by general Proctor that he was made a brigadier in the British service, for his conduct at Brownstown and Magagua, he returned the present with respectful contempt. Born with no title to command, but his native greatness, every tribe yielded submission to him at once, and no one ever disputed his precedence. Subtle and fierce in war, he was possessed of uncommon eloquence,—his speeches might bear a comparison with those of the most celebrated orators of Greece and Rome. His invective was terrible, as we had frequent occasion to experience, and as may be seen in the reproaches which he applied to Proctor, a few days before his death, in a speech which was found amongst the papers of the British officers. His form was uncommonly elegant; his stature about six feet, his limbs perfectly proportioned. He was honourably interred by the victors, by whom he was held in much respect, as an inveterate, but a magnanimous enemy.

In this engagement the British loss was nineteen regulars killed, and fifty wounded, and about six hundred prisoners. The Indians left one hundred and twenty on

the field. The American loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to upwards of fifty; seventeen of the slain were Kentuckians, and among them, colonel Whitely, a soldier of the revolution, who served on this occasion as a private. Several pieces of brass cannon, the trophies of our revolution, surrendered by Hull, were once more restored to our country. Proctor had fled as soon as the charge was made, and by means of swift horses was enabled to escape down the Thames, though hotly pursued. His carriage was, however, taken, in which his private papers had been left, in the haste of his retreat.

The time was now come, which would prove whether the stigma cast upon the chivalrous people of Kentucky by the infamous Proctor, in order that his own atrocious conduct might escape notice, was founded in truth. It was now seen whether, to use the words of this monster, they were a "ferocious and mortal foe, using the same mode of warfare, with the allies of Britain." The recollection of the affair of the river Raisin might have justified revenge: and what is more, the instruments who perpetrated those horrid deeds were now at their disposal; bereft of hope by this signal defeat and the loss of their great leader, the savages sued for peace, and as an earnest of their sincerity, offered to raise their tomahawks on the side of the United States, and to inflict upon the British prisoners, the same abominable cruelties, they had practised on the Americans. But the Kentuckians, to their honour, far from giving way to the passions of revenge, forebore even a word, or look of insult; there was not even an allusion to the murder of their brothers and friends; the prisoners were distributed in small parties, in the interior towns, and although extremely insulting in their deportment, were not merely treated with humanity, but in many places actually caressed and fed with dainties by the compassionate inhabitants. This treatment was carried to an excess, which might properly deserve the name of folly; were it not a noble mode of revenge for what our countrymen at that moment endured in the British dungeons on the land, and in the floating prisons on the sea, where they underwent every species of distress, wretchedness and torture.



Nor was the treatment of the conquered savages less generous. Peace was granted them, and during the succeeding winter they were actually subsisted at the publick expense. They stipulated to raise the tomahawk against their former friends, but engaged not to assail the defenceless and the non-combatant.*

The Indian war being now settled, and security restored to our frontier, the greater part of the volunteers were permitted to return home; and Harrison, after stationing general Cass at Detroit, with about one thousand men, proceeded, according to his instructions, with the remainder of his force, to join the army of the centre at Buffaloe. Shortly before his arrival at this place, an interesting correspondence between him and general Vincent, was brought on by a request from the latter, that the British prisoners in his possession might be treated with humanity. General Harrison, after assuring him that such a request was unnecessary, referred him to the prisoners themselves for information on this score. He then took occasion to go into a minute detail of the enormities committed by the British and Indians, in the mode of warfare which they had practised towards the Americans. He painted the scenes of the river Raisin, and the Miami, with others of a similar character, and which general Proctor had attempted to cover by an infamous slander of the western people: he at the same time stated, that in no single instance had the British complained of a deviation from civilized warfare on our part; for the truth of these facts, he appealed to the personal knowledge of general Vincent. General Harrison distinctly stated, that, in his treatment to British prisoners, he acted purely from a sense of humanity, and not on the score of reciprocity, and as there were still a number of those Indians, who reside beyond the boundaries of the United States, in the employment of the British, he now wished to be informed explicitly, whether these allies would be restrained in future, or whether general Vincent would permit them to practise their usual cruelties.

* The British ministers at Ghent a year afterwards, demanded as a *sine qua non*, that an article should be inserted in the treaty in favour of these their *quandam* allies, but who were at that time their enemies.

"Use then, I pray you," said he, "your authority and influence to stop the dreadful effusion of innocent blood, which proceeds from the employment of those savage monsters, whose aid, as must now be discovered, is so little to be depended on when most wanted, and which can have so trifling an effect on the issue of the war. The effect of their barbarities will not be confined to the present generation. Ages yet to come will feel the deep rooted hatred and enmity, which they must produce between the two nations." He concluded by declaring, that unless a stop should be put to these proceedings, he would be under the necessity of retorting the same treatment, which as a soldier he most sincerely deprecated. This part of his letter cannot be so well approved; it is a threat which the government would not have permitted to be put in execution; retaliation is only justifiable as a mode of preventing a violation of the laws of nations, but not as a punishment for it; this, in fact, places the civilized nations upon a footing with the barbarian. The wanton practice of military executions, was properly arrested by general Washington; but had he proceeded at once to the slaughter of his prisoners, it would have caused a war of extermination. There is something exceedingly repugnant to the feelings, in this substitution of the objects of punishment, in thus causing the innocent to suffer for the guilty.

The reply of general Vincent was not unlike that of sir Sidney Beckwith, vague and evasive. He expressed himself perfectly satisfied on the score of the treatment of the prisoners, but with respect to the other topics, he declined saying any thing; it was beyond his power to give an *explicit answer*; but he pledged his honour that to the utmost of his power, he would join with general Harrison in alleviating the calamities of war. Although general Harrison pledged himself to produce proofs of every thing which he stated, general Vincent chose to be silent upon the subject; neither disavowing that such acts were sanctioned by the British government, nor calling the truth of them in question; they will, therefore, remain an indelible stigma on the British name.

CHAPTER XL

Preparations for invading Canada—General Wilkinson takes command—Rendezvous of the American forces—General Wilkinson descends the St. Lawrence—Battle of Chrystler's field—Hampton's inability to co-operate—Failure of the expedition—Cruise of commodore Chauncey—The burning of Newark—British retaliation.

THE glorious result of the operations of the north-western army, and the splendid victory on the lake, opened the way to a more effectual invasion of Canada. We were now in the situation that we should have been at the commencement of the war, had Hull's expedition proved successful. There was, however, this difference, that the British had time to provide for a defence, by collecting troops, disciplining their militia, and fortifying the borders of the St. Lawrence. On the other hand, a more formidable force was collected on the frontier, than at any time since the war, under officers whose merits had been tried in actual service; and besides, the greater part of the Indians on our frontiers had declared against the British. The publick was now so elated by the series of brilliant victories to the westward, that it was thought the tide of fortune had at last turned in our favour, and it was expected that the administration would go about the conquest of Canada in earnest.

At the head of the war department, there was now a man of energy and distinguished talents, who had resided a long time abroad; and it was supposed, that from the natural bias of his mind to military affairs, he had availed himself of his opportunities to the best advantage. Much was expected from him. In a short time it was acknowledged, that great improvements were introduced into this department, particularly in the selection and promotion of the officers of the army. General Armstrong, knowing the sanguine expectations which prevailed through the United States, proceeded to the northern frontier, with a plan of operations digested in the cabinet; and which he intended to see put in execution under his own eye. The plan as afterwards developed was in itself

judicious, but there was, perhaps, in its execution, not a sufficient allowance for a change of circumstances. Although the season was far advanced, much might yet be done; but, to satisfy the publick expectations, to the extent to which they had been raised by the success of Harrison, was scarcely possible. Little short of the complete conquest of Canada would suffice, and but vague ideas of the nature of the enterprise, and the difficulties to be encountered, prevailed throughout the great body of the nation. The people in this country, like other sovereigns, are unfortunately too apt to look little further than the success or failure of their agents, without much weighing the peculiar circumstances under which they may have acted. To the desire of doing too much, may perhaps be attributed the misfortunes we experienced in a campaign, which resulted so differently from our wishes and expectations.

After the resignation of general Dearborn, general Wilkinson, who then commanded in the southern section of the union, was called to the command of the American forces. It was generally admitted, that he possessed a greater share of military science than any one in the army. The general, on taking command, issued an order which gave universal satisfaction; and it was expected that, for the sake of firmly establishing his reputation beyond the power of his enemies, he would endeavour to render some signal service to his country. The force under his command, on the Niagara, amounted to eight thousand regulars, besides those under Harrison, who was expected in the course of the month of October. General Hampton, a distinguished revolutionary officer, had also been called from the south, and appointed to the command of the army of the north, then encamped at Plattsburg, and amounting to about four thousand men. As the season for military operations was drawing to a close, it was determined to lose no time, and measures were immediately taken for carrying into effect the projected invasion. The outline of the plan which had been adopted, was simply to descend the St. Lawrence, passing the British posts above, and after a junction with general Hampton at some designated point on the river,

proceed to the island of Montreal; and then, to use the words of general Wilkinson, "their artillery, bayonets, and swords, must secure them a triumph, or provide for them honourable graves." It is said that a difference of opinion existed between the general and the secretary at war; the former not considering it prudent to leave Kingston, and other British garrisons, in the rear; while the latter seemed to think, that as there was no doubt of taking Montreal, all the posts on the river and lakes above that place, must fall of course. The correctness of his reasoning cannot be denied; but as there is a degree of uncertainty in every human undertaking, it is unwise to make no allowance for some possible failure, and not to calculate the consequences; excepting indeed, in those cases, where the party, like Cæsar, resolves to be great or dead.

The army, which had been distributed in different corps, and stationed at various points, was now to be concentrated at some place most convenient for its embarkation. For this purpose Grenadier's Island, which lies between Sackett's Harbour and Kingston, was selected, on account of its contiguity to the St. Lawrence, as the most proper place of rendezvous. On the second of October, general Wilkinson left fort George, which the principal body of the troops, and soon after reached the island, where he occupied himself incessantly in making the necessary preparations for the prosecution of his enterprise. He several times visited Sackett's Harbour, at which place the troops first arrived, and after receiving their necessary supplies, proceeded to the place of rendezvous. Colonel Scott, whom he had left in command at fort George, was ordered to embark with his regiment of artillery, and colonel Randolph's infantry, on board a vessel of the squadron, and proceed to the island. Colonel Dennis was left in the command of Sackett's Harbour; and the general having provided a sufficient number of boats to transport the artillery through the St. Lawrence, proceeded to put the troops in motion. By the twenty-third, the troops thus collected, exceeded seven thousand men, and were composed of colonel Porter's light artillery, a few companies of colonel Scott's

and Macomb's regiments of artillery, twelve regiments of infantry, and Forsythe's rifle corps.

In consequence of the high winds, which prevailed for several days on the lake, it was not until the twenty-fifth that the army could get under weigh. The general at this time experienced a severe illness, notwithstanding which, he still continued to direct the movements of the army. A few days before, he received intelligence, that the enemy, in consequence of his departure from fort George, had also abandoned that neighbourhood and was occupied in concentrating his forces at Kingston, conceiving that place to be the object of attack. General Wilkinson to favour this idea, after entering the St. Lawrence, fixed on French Creek as the place of rendezvous, and which, from the circumstance of being opposite the most proper point of debarkation on the Canada side, might completely deceive the enemy. General Brown, now a brigadier in the service of the United States, was ordered to take the command of the advance of the army at this place. On the first of November, a British squadron made its appearance near French creek, with a large body of infantry; a battery of three eighteen-pounders, skilfully managed by captains M'Pherson and Fanning, soon forced them to retire. The attack was renewed the next morning, but with no better success; and as the other corps of the army now daily arrived, the enemy thought proper to move off. On the sixth, the army was put in motion, and in the evening landed a few miles above the British fort Prescott. After reconnoitring the passage at this place, and finding that the fort commanded the river, general Wilkinson directed the fixed ammunition to be transported by land to a safe point below, and determined to take advantage of the night to pass with the flotilla, while the troops were marched to the same point, leaving on board the boats merely a sufficient number to navigate them. Availing himself of a heavy fog which came on in the evening, the commander endeavoured to pass the fort unobserved; but the weather clearing up, and the moon shining, he was discovered by the enemy, who opened a heavy fire. General Brown, who was in the rear with the flotilla,

thought it prudent to land for the present, until the night should grow darker. He then proceeded down the river, but not without being discovered, and again exposed to a severe cannonade; notwithstanding which, not one out of three hundred boats suffered the slightest injury. Before ten o'clock the next day, they had all safely arrived at the place of destination. A messenger was now despatched to general Hampton, informing him of the movement of the army, and requiring his co-operation.

The enemy by this time, having penetrated the design of the Americans, immediately occupied themselves with great assiduity, to counteract it. On the seventh, the descent was found to be impeded by considerable bodies of the British, stationed at the narrow parts of the river, where they could annoy our boats within musket shot; and what increased the embarrassment, the illness of the commander-in-chief, had augmented in the most alarming degree. The army was also delayed for half a day in extricating two schooners loaded with provisions, which had been driven into a part of the river near Ogdensburgh, by the enemy's fire. A corps d'elite of twelve hundred men, under colonel M'Comb, being despatched to remove the obstructions to the descent of the army, at three o'clock he was followed by the main body. On passing the first rapids of the St. Lawrence, the barge of the commander-in-chief was assailed by two pieces of artillery, but without any other injury than cutting the rigging. The attention of the enemy was soon diverted by lieutenant colonel Eustis, who returned their fire from some light barges, while major Forsythe at the same time, landing some of his riflemen, attacked them unexpectedly, and carried off three pieces of their artillery. The flotilla came to about six miles below Hamilton, and there received intelligence that colonel M'Comb had routed the enemy at a block-house two miles below, and that the dragoons attached to the first division of the enemy, had been collected at a place called the White House, at a contraction of the river; to which point the flotilla was ordered the next morning to proceed. On arriving at this place on the eighth, general Brown was ordered to go forward with his brigade,

to reinforce colonel M'Comb, and to take command of the advance, while the commander-in-chief directed the transportation of the dragoons across the St. Lawrence. The last was completed during the night.

The British finding themselves freed from any apprehensions of attack on Kingston, moved with the greater part of their force, to harrass the American army. On the ninth, they had so far gained upon its rear, as to bring on a skirmish between the American riflemen and a party of militia and Indians. To be thus harrassed by a large body of troops hanging on its rear, is a situation which military men have always carefully avoided, and this was the necessary consequence of withdrawing the troops from above, which might have kept them in check. Had two thousand men been stationed in the vicinity of Kingston to threaten it, the enemy would have been compelled to concentrate his force at this place, by which means the main body of the army might have passed in greater safety. In the course of the day, the cavalry and four pieces of artillery under captain M'Pherson, were ordered to clear the coast as far as the head of the *Longue Saut*; and in the evening the army arrived at a place called the Yellow House, which stands near the Saut. As the passage of this place was attended with considerable difficulty, on account of the rapidity of the current and of its length, it was deemed prudent to wait until the next day, and in the meanwhile it became necessary to use the utmost precaution.

On the morning of the tenth, general Brown, with the troops under his command, excepting two pieces of artillery, and the second regiment of dragoons, was ordered to march in advance of the army. A regard for the safety of the men, had induced the commander-in-chief to retain as few of the troops in the boats as possible, on account of the exposure to which they would be subject, in the long and dangerous passage of these rapids, and where the enemy had in all probability established batteries for the purpose of impeding their descent. The second regiment of dragoons, and a considerable portion of the other brigades, which had been withdrawn from the boats, were ordered to follow under general Boyd, the

steps of general Brown, to prevent the enemy who were still hanging on the rear of the army, from making any advantageous attack. General Brown now commenced his march at the head of his troops, consisting principally of colonel M'Comb's artillery, and a part of Scott's, part of the light artillery, the riflemen, and the sixth, fifteenth and twenty-second regiments. It was not long before he found himself engaged with a strong party at a block-house near the Saut, which after a contest of a few minutes, was repulsed by the riflemen under Forsythe, who was severely wounded. About the same time some of the enemy's galleys approached the flotilla, which had landed, and commenced a fire upon it, by which a number of the boats were injured; two eighteen pounders, however, being hastily run on shore, a fire from them soon compelled the assailants to retire. The day being now too far spent to attempt the Saut, it was resolved to postpone it until the day following.

At ten o'clock on the eleventh, at the moment that the flotilla was about to proceed, and when at the same time, the division under general Boyd, consisting of his own and the brigades of generals Covington and Swartwout, were drawn up in marching order, an alarm was given that the enemy was discovered approaching in column. The commander-in-chief and general Lewis, being both too much indisposed to take the command, general Boyd was ordered to face about and attack the approaching army. The enemy's galleys had at the same time approached, for the purpose of attacking the rear of the American flotilla. General Boyd now advanced with his detachment formed in three columns, and ordered a part of general Swartwout's brigade to move forward, and bring the enemy to action. Colonel Ripley, accordingly, at the head of the twenty-first regiment, passed the wood which skirts the open ground called Chrystler's field, and drove in several of the enemy's parties. On entering the field, he met the advance of the British, consisting of the forty-ninth and the Glengary fencibles. Colonel Ripley immediately ordered a charge, which was executed with such surprising firmness, that these two regiments, nearly double his numbers, were com-

pelled to retire; and on making a stand, were a second time driven before the bayonet, and compelled to pass over the ravines and fences, by which the field was intersected, until they fell on their main body. General Covington had, before this, advanced upon the right of the enemy, where his artillery was posted, and at the moment colonel Ripley had assailed the left flank, the right was forced by a determined onset, and success appeared scarcely doubtful. Unfortunately, however, general Covington, whose activity had rendered him conspicuous, became a mark for the sharp-shooters of the enemy stationed in Chrystler's house, and he was shot from his horse. The fall of this gallant officer arrested the progress of the brigade, and the artillery of the enemy threw it into confusion, and caused it to fall back in disorder. The British commander now wheeled part of his line into column, with the view of capturing some pieces of artillery, which were no longer supported. A body of dragoons, under the adjutant-general, Walbach, attempted, in a very gallant manner, to charge the British column, but from the nature of the ground was not successful. At this critical moment, colonel Ripley, who had been engaged with the enemy's left flank, threw his regiment between the artillery and the advancing column, and frustrated their design. The British fell back with precipitation. The regiments which had broken, had not retired from the field, but still continued to keep up an irregular fight with various success; and the twenty-first having by this time expended its ammunition, and being much exposed, was withdrawn to another position, and in the meanwhile the enemy again attempted to possess themselves of the artillery. One piece was unfortunately captured by them, in consequence of the death of lieutenant William S. Smith, who commanded it; the others were brought off by the coolness and bravery of captain Armstrong Irvine. The action soon after ceased, having been kept up for two hours, by little better than raw troops against an equal number of veterans. The British force consisted of detachments from the forty-ninth, eighty-fourth, hundred and fourth, the Voltigeurs, and the Glengary regiment. The enemy soon

after retired to their camp, and the Americans to their boats.

In this battle the loss of the Americans, in killed and wounded, amounted to three hundred and thirty-nine, of whom one hundred and two were killed: among these were lieutenants Smith, Hunter, and Olmstead; among the wounded, were general Covington, who afterwards died; colonel Preston, majors Chambers, Noon and Cummings; captains Townsend, Foster, Myers, Campbell, and Murdock; and lieutenants Heaton, Williams, Lynch, Pelham, Brown, and Creery. The British loss could not have been less than that of the Americans.

Both parties claimed the victory on this occasion, but it was properly a drawn battle; the British retiring to their encampments, and the Americans to their boats. Perhaps, from the circumstance of the enemy's never again assailing the American army, it may be taken for granted, that they were defeated in their object. General Brown had, in the meanwhile, reached the foot of the Rapids, and awaited the arrival of the army. On the eleventh, the army proceeded on its course, and joined the advance near Barnhart. At this place, the commander-in-chief received a letter from general Hampton, which, in the most unexpected manner, put an end at once to the further prosecution of the design against Montreal.

On the sixth, a few days before the battle of Chrystler's field, the commander-in-chief had given orders to general Hampton, to meet him at St. Regis; but soon after this order, a letter was received from general Hampton, in which, after stating that from the disclosure of the state of general Wilkinson's supply of provisions, and the situation of the roads to St. Regis, which rendered it impossible to transport a greater quantity than could be carried by a man on his back, he had determined to open a communication from Plattsburgh to Conewago, or by any other point on the St. Lawrence, which the commander-in-chief might indicate. General Hampton sometime before this, with a view to a further movement of his troops, had descended the Chateaugay river; about the same time that the army was concentrated on lake

Ontario. Sir George Prevost perceiving this movement towards Montreal, had collected all his force at this point, to oppose the march of Hampton. On the twenty-first of October this officer crossed the line, but soon found his road obstructed by fallen timber, and the ambuscade of the enemy's militia and Indians. A wood of considerable extent would have to be passed, before they could reach the open country, and while the engineers were engaged in cutting a way through, colonel Purdy was detached with the light troops and one regiment of the line, to turn their flank, and then seize on the open country below. In this he succeeded, and the army by the next day reached the position of the advance. But it was discovered that about seven miles further, there was a wood which had been felled and formed into an abatis, and that a succession of breast-works, some of them well supplied with artillery, had been formed by the main body of the enemy. Colonel Purdy, on the twenty-fifth, was ordered to march down the river on the opposite side, and on passing the enemy, to cross over, and attack him in his rear, whilst the brigade under general Izard would attack him in front. Colonel Purdy had not marched far, when his orders were countermanded; but on his return, he was attacked by the enemy's infantry and Indians, and at first thrown into some confusion, but the assailants were soon after repulsed; they came out at the same moment in front, and attacked general Izard, but were compelled to retire behind their defences. General Hampton receiving information that the enemy were continually reinforced, resolved, on the advice of his officers, to retreat to a position which he had occupied some days before, called the Four Corners, where he arrived on the last day of the month. The British claimed a victory for this affair, which they say was gained with a very inferior force. But it was not the intention of general Hampton to penetrate to Montreal, but merely to divert the attention of the British from the army of general Wilkinson, with which it was his intention to form a junction some days afterwards. Having accomplished his object; he fell back to the position whence he could, with greater facility, make his way to some point on the

St. Lawrence. It was then that on the receipt of the order of the commander-in-chief, he despatched the letter already mentioned, stating the impracticability of a compliance. On the receipt of general Hampton's communication, a council of the principal officers was called, by which it was determined that the objects of the campaign were no longer attainable; it was therefore resolved to retire into winter quarters at French Mills. The troops under general Hampton soon after followed his example, and in consequence of the illness of that officer, his corps was left under the command of general Izard.

Thus terminated a campaign, which gave rise to dissatisfaction, proportioned to the high expectations which had been indulged; this unexpected turn of affairs appeared to cast a shade upon all the brilliant series of success which had preceded. Opinion was much divided as to the causes of the failure, and as to the parties who ought to bear the blame. With respect to general Wilkinson, after the disappointment in his reinforcement and supplies, it would not perhaps have been prudent for him to have persevered; and besides, from the state of his health, he was not qualified to carry into execution what would have required the utmost vigour of mind and body. With respect to Hampton, military men will probably say, that it was his duty to have obeyed; but if we place implicit reliance upon the correctness of the facts which he alleged, it will be difficult to condemn his conduct. With respect to the whole plan of operations, it was certainly judicious; it ought from the first to have been adopted. By seizing a favourable position on the St. Lawrence and strongly fortifying it, the communication between the upper and lower provinces would have been cut off, and the most important results would have followed. The season, however, was too far advanced to attempt it with just expectations of success. It is by no means certain, that Montreal could have been taken without a siege of some length; and the strength of the British was probably greater than it had been supposed. The presence of the secretary at war, for the purpose of superintending the operations of the campaign, was perhaps more injurious than serviceable. He was by no means in a situation in

which he could be considered responsible, although in case of success, the merit of it would be assigned to him. This is an unfair and improper interference which ought to be condemned.

While these things were taking place on the land, the commander of our squadron on the lake was not idle. Commodore Chauncey, it has been seen, after his first attempt to bring the enemy to action, returned to Sackett's Harbour, for the purpose of obtaining a fresh supply of provisions. After being reinforced by a new schooner, he again sailed on a cruise; and on the seventh of September, discovered the British squadron near the Niagara, and immediately stood for it. Sir James, on perceiving the Americans, made sail to the northward, and was pursued during four days and nights; but owing to the dull sailing of a greater part of the pursuers, he was enabled to keep out of their reach. On the fourth day, off Genesee river, commodore Chauncey having a breeze, while sir James lay becalmed, endeavoured to close with him; this he was not able to accomplish, the enemy taking the breeze also, when the American squadron had approached within half a mile. After a running fight of more than three hours, the British escaped; but the next morning ran into Amherst bay, whither the American commodore, for want of a pilot, did not think it prudent to follow, but contented himself with forming a blockade. In the running fight, the British sustained considerable injury; that of the Americans was very trifling. The blockade was continued until the seventeenth of September, when in consequence of a heavy gale which blew from the westward, the commodore was compelled to leave his station, and the British escaped into Kingston.

After remaining but a short time in Sackett's Harbour, commodore Chauncey again sailed towards Niagara, where he arrived on the twenty-fourth, having passed sir James at the False Ducks, without noticing him, intending to draw him into the lake. A few days after, the American commodore received information, that the enemy was in the harbour of York; he therefore made sail to that place, as fast as his dull sailing schooners would permit; and on the twenty-seventh, early in the morning, discovered the

enemy in motion in the bay, and immediately stood for him. This being perceived by sir James, he stood out and endeavoured to escape to the southward; but finding that the American was closing upon him, tacked his squadron in succession; and commenced a well directed fire at the Pike, in order to cover his rear; and attacking the rear of his opponent as he passed to leeward; this was prevented by the skilful manœuvring of Chauncey, by bearing down in line on the centre of the enemy's squadron, which was thrown into confusion, and Yeo immediately bore away, but not before his ship had been roughly handled by that of the commodore. In twenty minutes, the main and mizentopmast and mainyard of the Wolf, were shot away; the British commander set sail upon his foremast, and keeping dead before the wind, was enabled to outsail the greater part of Chauncey's squadron. The chase was continued until three o'clock, the Pike having the Asp in tow, and during the greater part of this time, within reach of the enemy's shot. Captain Crane, in the Madison, and lieutenant Brown, of the Onaida, used every exertion to close with the enemy, but without success. The chase was at length reluctantly given up, as it came on to blow almost a gale, and there was no hope of closing with the enemy before he could reach the British batteries, and without great risk of running ashore. The commodore was justly entitled to claim a victory in this affair; although the enemy were not captured, they were certainly beaten; two of his vessels were at one moment completely in the commodore's power; but from his eagerness to close with the whole fleet, they effected their escape. In addition to the general policy of sir James Yeo, the late affair on lake Erie had rendered him particularly careful to avoid an engagement. The loss on board the Pike was considerable, owing to her having been so long exposed to the fire of the enemy's fleet; the most serious, however, was occasioned by the bursting of one of her guns, by which twenty-two men were killed and wounded; the total amounted to twenty-seven. The vessel was a good deal cut up in her hull and rigging.

Shortly after this affair, the commodore having communicated with general Wilkinson on the subject of the

expedition then on foot, was advised to continue to watch the enemy's squadron; and, if possible, to prevent its return to Kingston. About the beginning of October, the commodore again chased the enemy's fleet for several days, and forced it to take refuge in Burlington bay; the next morning, on sending the *Lady of the Lake* to reconnoitre, it was discovered that sir James had taken advantage of the darkness of the night, and escaped to Kingston. Much pleasantry was indulged at this time, at the shyness of the British knight, and his ungallant escape from the *Lady of the Lake*. The chase was now renewed, and, favoured by the wind, the commodore came in sight of seven schooners, and captured five of them, in spite of their efforts to escape by separating. Before sun-down, three of them struck to the Pike, and another to the *Sylph* and the *Lady of the Lake*, and a fifth was afterwards captured by the *Sylph*. They turned out to be gun vessels, bound to the head of the lake as transports. Two of them were the *Julia* and *Growler*, which had been lost by the Americans. On board were three hundred soldiers, belonging to the *De Watteville* regiment. It was ascertained that the ship of sir James Yeo, and the *Royal George*, had suffered very considerable injury, as well as loss in killed and wounded. Commodore Chauncey remained master of the lake during the remainder of the season.

It was not long before the consequences of leaving a large force in the rear, and withdrawing the troops from the Niagara, were felt. General Harrison reached Buffalo some days after the departure of the commander-in-chief; and was to follow immediately, but was compelled to wait until some time in November, in consequence of the deficiency of transports. It was not until general Wilkinson had gone into winter quarters, that Harrison embarked; orders had been previously sent for him to remain, but unfortunately these did not reach fort George until after his departure. The fort was left under the command of general M'Clure, his force consisting entirely of militia, whose term of service had nearly expired. By the tenth of December, the force under general M'Clure was reduced to a handful of men, and on a consultation

of officers, it was unanimously agreed, that this place was no longer tenable. It was moreover ascertained, that the enemy was on his march with a considerable force. The general had scarcely time to pass the river after having blown up the fort, before the British appeared. The retreat of general M'Clure was also preceded by an act which every American must sincerely regret, and which excited universal dissatisfaction throughout the United States. There is a handsome village, situated immediately below the fort, called Newark; as this place, from its situation, would greatly favour the besiegers, an authority had therefore been given by the secretary at war, in case it became necessary for the defence of the fort, to destroy the village, and by that means prevent the enemy from taking shelter. The general, misconceiving these orders, after giving notice to the inhabitants to retire with their effects, fired the buildings, and left the village in flames. This act was no sooner known to the government, than it was promptly disavowed. On the sixth of January following, the order under which general M'Clure conceived himself to have acted, was enclosed to sir George Prevost, with a formal declaration, that the act was unauthorised. To this, an answer dated the tenth of February, was given by the governour of Canada, expressing "great satisfaction, that he had received assurance that the perpetration of the burning of the town of Newark, was both unauthorised by the American government, and abhorrent to every American feeling; that if any outrages had ensued the wanton and unjustifiable destruction of Newark, *passing the bounds of just retaliation*, they were to be attributed to the influence of irritated passions, on the part of the unfortunate sufferers by that event."

The difference of the principles, on which the war was carried on by the Americans and by the British, is very striking: the first, uniformly disavowed the system of retaliation for the outrages committed by the British officers, considering them unauthorised until expressly acknowledged by the British government, on the contrary, the British proceeded at once to retaliate, without waiting to inquire whether the violation of the laws of war was disapproved or sanctioned. Had the Americans proceeded

upon the same principles as their enemies, the burning of Newark would have been amply justified, by the outrages wantonly committed on lake Champlain and on the seaboard, without any pretext. So strictly did our government adhere to this principle, that shortly after the massacre and conflagration of the village of Hampton, when the captain of an American privateer destroyed some private property in the West Indies, on the score of retaliation, his commission was instantly taken from him, and the act publicly disapproved. Our government on all occasions discovered the highest sense of honourable warfare. Our humane treatment to British prisoners, was acknowledged by lord Castlereagh in the house of commons, but meanly attributed by him to fear! We have certainly not shown ourselves afraid to fight, either on the ocean or on the land, our fear then has been that of doing injustice.

Sir George Prevost, however, did not wait for the disavowal of the American government; he had already inflicted a retaliation sufficient to satisfy the vengeance of the fiercest enemy. At day-light on the nineteenth of December, fort Niagara was surprised by colonel Murray, with about four hundred men, and the garrison, nearly three hundred in number, and principally invalids, was put to the sword; not more than twenty being able to escape. The commanding officer, captain Leonard, appears to have been shamefully negligent, or perhaps bought by the enemy: he was absent at the time, and had used no precautions against an assault. Having possessed themselves of this place, they soon after increased their force, and immediately proceeded to lay waste the Niagara frontier with fire and sword. The militia, hastily collected, could oppose no resistance to a large body of British regulars and seven hundred Indians. A spirited, but unavailing attempt was made by major Bennett to defend Lewistown; this village, together with that of Manchester, Young's-town, and the Indian village of the Tuscarroras, were speedily reduced to ashes, and many of the inhabitants butchered. Major Mellory advanced from Shlosser, to oppose the invaders, but was compelled by superior numbers to retreat. On the thirtieth, a detachment landed at Black Rock, and proceeded to Buffa-

loe; general Hall had organized a body of militia, but on the approach of the enemy, they could not be induced to hold their ground. Great exertions were made by majors Staunton and Norton, and lieutenant Riddle, but to no purpose. The village was soon after reduced to ashes, and the whole frontier, for many miles, exhibited a scene of ruin and devastation. Here was indeed ample vengeance for the burning of Newark. Even the British general was satisfied, as appears by his proclamation of the twelfth of January: "the opportunity of punishment has occurred, and a *full measure of retribution has taken place*," and he declared his intention of "pursuing no further a system of warfare so revolting to his own feelings, and so little congenial to the British character." It may be well to ask, whether the conflagrations and pillaging antecedently committed on lake Champlain, and the horrid outrages in the Chesapeake, in the course of the summer, were also in retaliation for the burning of Newark? Certain it is that this affair not only produced *anticipated* retaliation, but was followed up by subsequent retaliatory measures with insatiate vengeance. The devastating decree of admiral Cochrane was founded in part on the affair of Newark, and the groundless charge of burning a brick house in Upper Canada, in which the Americans found a human scalp. It was not enough that the burning of this unfortunate village should have been reprobated and disavowed by our government; it was not enough that it should be expiated by an extensive scene of murder and conflagration, which, according to the admission of sir George Prevost, amply glutted the vengeance of Britain; but our extensive sea-coast of fifteen hundred miles, and our populous and flourishing cities, must be given to destruction and pillage, to fill up the measure of British retaliation. These things will, however, be detailed in the proper place; but it is difficult to avoid anticipating events so closely connected with the present.

CHAPTER XII.

Meeting of congress, and violence of party spirit—Measures for carrying on the war—Unfriendly deportment of the New England states—The subject of retaliation—A committee of congress inquires into the manner in which the war has been carried on by the enemy—The war gaining ground in the United States.

ON the sixth of December, the congress of the United States again assembled. The fever of party spirit had almost reached its crisis, and the debates which took place were more distinguished for virulent animosity, than had been witnessed since the foundation of our government. It would be improper to enter minutely into a subject, which had better be forgotten, at any rate; but in this simple narrative of the events of the war, there is scarcely room for such a discussion. On the one side, we find the opposition accused of manifesting a spirit of hostility to their country, and a determined resistance to every measure for carrying on the war, although at this time, from the peremptory rejection of the Russian mediation, there existed no hopes of peace. On the other hand, the party in power was accused of having ruined the country, destroyed its commerce, involved it in debts which it could never pay, and of being engaged in a guilty project of conquest, under the pretext of vindicating national rights. Every measure with respect to the war, was sure to involve in it a consideration of its causes, and the same discussions were renewed until they grew stale by repetition. The opposition to every measure proposed for the prosecution of hostilities, turned upon the injustice and wickedness of the war, topics which ought to have been at an end when once declared. By some it was denied that any cause of war existed, and by others, that although we had cause, the time chosen for declaring it was improper. Notwithstanding the warm and often intemperate debates, to which these subjects gave rise, the different measures in support of the war continued to be carried by large majorities. In some of the New England states, the

opposition was carried on in a spirit of animosity, which occasioned a serious regret in the breasts of the more considerate. It was there not confined to the administration, but was directed against the federal constitution itself. They now discovered that this instrument was not calculated to insure their happiness, and their conduct was such as to lead Great Britain to believe, that they were ripe for a separation. These sentiments did not, by any means, meet the concurrence of the opposition party in other parts of the United States, and certainly not of the great mass of the population of the states where they were expressed. The pressure of the embargo, which was about this time adopted, and the non-intercourse, it was said, were infinitely more severe on the people of New England, than on the southern districts; and the administration was accused of partiality. It was alleged in reply, that the smuggling on the Canada lines, and the trade from the northern ports, by the connivance of the British, was carried on to such an extent as almost to put the government at defiance; that the British squadron, which had so much harassed the southern coasts, had been in a great measure supplied to the northward, and that without such assistance it would be difficult for them to remain on our coast.

The war had hitherto been supported by means of loans; as the only resources of the government, from the sale of publick lands and imposts, were altogether inadequate; and it was now beginning to be seen, that even as the security upon which to support a credit, these were insufficient. It was therefore proposed to create an internal revenue. This, it may be said, ought to have been coeval with the war; but the unwillingness of the people to submit to taxation, had already been seen; it was therefore the wish of the administration to avoid this as long as possible. At the declaration of war, it was believed that England would be satisfied with our having the ability to declare it, without waiting to ascertain whether we could carry it on. The proposals for a cessation of hostilities, and the Russian mediation, kept up the hopes of peace for a considerable time; measures disagreeable to the people were therefore delayed until unavoidable, or rather until

called for by themselves. The expenses of the war had also unexpectedly increased, from the unlooked for reverses of our arms to the westward, which rendered it necessary to create fleets on the lakes; and in consequence of the unwillingness of the New England people to join heartily in its prosecution. Had we possessed ourselves of Upper Canada, there is very little doubt but that we should have had peace the first year of the war; and it was not until she discovered our weakness in that quarter, that England rejected the mediation, in hopes of being able to inflict upon us some serious injury. Not that the loss of Canada would have been a matter of so much consequence to Great Britain, but it would have furnished her with a conclusive proof, that she could have no hope of severing the union by sowing dissensions between the different states. The vast expense which we had to incur on the lakes, and on the Canadian frontier, could not have been easily foreseen.

The next thing with which the national legislature occupied itself, was the providing some means of filling the ranks of the army. The difficulty of enlisting men had been found to increase, and was even an argument in use, to prove that the war was not popular. But this could be easily accounted for, from the unwillingness of men, without being urged by their necessities, to enter into a positive engagement to serve as common soldiers for a number of years. The station of an enlisted soldier, from our long state of peace, had beside grown into disrepute; hardly any but the most worthless could be prevailed upon to enlist. The farmers' sons, and the young mechanicks, were willing enough to engage as volunteers, or to turn out on a tour of militia duty, but it was a very difficult matter to induce them to enter into engagements which they regarded as disreputable. It would naturally require a considerable length of time, before this opinion could be subdued. The profession of the common soldier during our long peace, and on account of the inconsiderable force kept on foot, had sunk very low in the estimation of the people: an enlisted soldier, was almost proverbial of a lazy worthless fellow. The only mode of combating this aversion, was the offering of extravagant bounties, not

so much with a view to hold out a bait to the cupidity of individuals, as to furnish them with an excuse, and to overcome the popular prejudice against this mode of serving the country. An idea was also prevalent, that the obligations of the enlisted soldier created a species of slavery; at least, were incompatible with republican freedom; this was sufficient to prevent a great number of spirited and enterprising young men from entering the army. A law was passed during the session, increasing the pay of privates, and giving them bounties in money and lands, to a considerable amount. This, it was confidently hoped, would produce the desired effect.

About this time a very interesting subject was submitted to the consideration of congress. Twenty-three American soldiers, taken at the battle of Queenstown, in the autumn of 1812, were detained in close confinement as British subjects; and sent to England to undergo a trial for treason. On this being made known to our government, orders were given to general Dearborn to confine a like number of British prisoners taken at fort George, and to keep them as hostages for the safety of the Americans; which was carried into effect, and soon after made known to the governor of Canada. The British government was no sooner informed of this, than governor Prevost was ordered to place forty-six American officers and non-commissioned officers in confinement, to ensure the safety of the British soldiers. Governor Prevost, in his letter to general Wilkinson upon this subject, stated, that he had been directed to apprise him, that if any of the British prisoners should suffer death, in consequence of any of the American soldiers being found guilty, and the known law of Great Britain and of every other country in similar circumstances executed, double the number of American officers and non-commissioned officers, should suffer instant death: he further notified the general, for the information of the American government, that orders had been given to the British commanders to prosecute the war with unmitigated severity, if after this notice, the American government should unhappily not be deterred from putting to death any of the British soldiers now in confinement. General Wilkinson, in his reply, forbore to

animadvert on the nature of the procedure, but could not help expressing his surprise at the threat by which the British government supposed the United States could be awed into submission. "The government of the United States," said he, "cannot be deterred by any consideration of life or death, of depredation or conflagration, from the faithful discharge of its duty towards the American people." The arrogance and haughtiness of Britain, in holding this language, justly excited the indignation of every American; this language might be addressed to the miserable nations of Asia, upon whom she has been in the habit of practising every species of lawless violence; but when addressed to a people who are proud of their independence, and jealous of their national honour, which every individual feels as his own, so far from intimidating, it was only calculated to awaken resistance. General Wilkinson soon after informed governor Prevost, that, in consequence of orders he had received from his government, he had put forty-six British officers in confinement, to be detained until it should be known that the American officers were released. On the receipt of this information, the governor ordered all the American prisoners into close confinement, and a similar step was soon after taken by our government.

This interesting subject gave rise to warm debates in congress. One party insisting that Great Britain had a right to her subjects, in all situations and under all circumstances; that they were in fact her property, and without her consent they never could free themselves from her authority; they contended further, that man cannot divest himself of allegiance to the government or prince, of the country in which he happens to be born: that although he may leave the country of his birth for a time, he never can expatriate himself. The procedure of government was condemned in attempting to oppose the British, in punishing the natives of Great Britain, who have been naturalized in this country, and have taken up arms in its cause; their having resided amongst us ten years, or twenty years before the war, being immaterial, they must be regarded in the same light as deserters from her armies. It was answered on the other

side, that it ill became Americans to deny the right of expatriation on principle, however we might from necessity yield to the unjust laws of other nations, where the individual is regarded as a slave; for he that has an *owner* whom he cannot change, is indeed a slave. Can it be possible, it was asked, for an American to contend on principle, that a free man cannot change his allegiance, and attach himself to the country of his choice, but must drag a chain after him at every remove? This doctrine could only originate in that species of slavery, called the feudal system, or under an absolute despot, who considers his subjects as without any rights. The doctrine indeed is closely allied to that of the divine right of kings, or rather of legitimate sovereigns; for, according to some individuals, even in this country, no government is lawful unless it exists in the hands of some one who claims it by birthright; at least, that this is the only just foundation of European governments. Whatever may exist in other nations, and beyond our controul, we ought never to forget, that such a state arises from their corruption or weakness, and that we ought sincerely to wish with the great Washington, in his farewell address, that they could be altogether as we are. If we ought not to reprobate their systems, let us view them with compassion; but how can we admire them, without at the same time despising our own noble institutions! The principle of American liberty is, that no man is born a slave, and that allegiance is a matter of choice, not force; and however we might unavoidably give way, where we interfered with the slavish practices of other nations, we ought never to approve the principle. But, it was contended, that according to the laws of nations and their uniform practice, the right of expatriation was acknowledged. Numerous instances were cited, where the subjects of a nation were taken in arms against her, and regularly exchanged; the practice of Great Britain, in naturalizing foreigners was cited, by which they were placed on the same footing with her native citizens, and equally entitled to protection. She could not object to our practice of naturalizing her subjects, for she practised the same thing with respect to our citizens, unless

indeed it be contended, that every thing she does is lawful, while the same thing in another would be unlawful? Would she not think herself bound to protect her adopted subjects, whom she solemnly undertakes to protect against all the world, without exception. If the United States alone naturalized foreigners, the case might then rest on its principles; but when the same thing is practised every where, who has a right to complain? A case in point was adduced; to shew the practice of the British government, where she was differently situated; having engaged in her service a regiment of French emigrants, to serve against France, the question was agitated in the house of commons, whether they should proceed to retaliate, in case the French should put any of them to death, and it was agreed that such would have been their duty. They went much further than the American government: Lord Mulgrave declared in debate, that, "while he had the command of the British troops at Toulon, and the French, who voluntarily flocked to their standard, under the authority and invitation of his majesty's proclamation, he had always considered the latter as entitled to the same protection in every respect, as the British troops. Thus it appears, that both in principle and practice, the conduct of Great Britain has been similar to that of the United States.

The result of this debate was, a determination to maintain with firmness the position which the administration had taken; and if Great Britain persisted in the fell resolution of rendering the war bloody beyond the example of modern times; as they had already rendered it most barbarous and ferocious, the United States must reluctantly pursue a course to be lamented by every man of common humanity.

Somewhat connected with this, an investigation was set on foot, as to the spirit and manner in which the war had been carried on by the enemy. The report of the committee enumerated the various instances, in which the British military and naval officers had violated the known usages of civilized nations, in the mode of prosecuting this war against the United States. The massacres on the river Raisin, the depredations and conflagrations

on the lakes, before there existed any pretext for retaliation, and the barbarous warfare of the sea coast, were spoken of in the strongest terms of indignation. The war had been conducted, on the part of Great Britain, nearly in the same spirit, as at the commencement of our struggle for independence; she appeared to be actuated by a belief that she was chastising rebellious subjects, and not contending with an independent nation. The treatment of American prisoners was the most cruel that can be imagined; the horrors of the prison ships, were renewed; several hundred unhappy wretches were shut up, without light or air, in the holds of the ships, and thus transported across the Atlantic, stowed together like miserable Africans, in the slave trade. In this cruel and unnecessary transportation across the Atlantic, many of our countrymen perished for want of air and nourishment, and all experienced sufferings almost incredible. This treatment was contrasted with that received by the British prisoners in this country; in fact they were treated more like guests than prisoners. The committee declared itself satisfied, from the evidence submitted to it, that Great Britain had violated the laws of war, in the most flagrant manner; and submitted to congress the propriety of devising some mode of putting a stop to such disgraceful conduct. Amongst the most extraordinary of the enemy's acts, was the putting in close confinement the unfortunate Americans, who had been kidnapped by her before the war, and compelled to fight her battles. *About two thousand* were acknowledged to be Americans, and, on refusing to fight against their country, were compelled to undergo the same treatment as if they had been prisoners of war. This was, indeed, accumulating outrage upon outrage.

It were well if this had been the whole number in her service; on the contrary, there was every reason to believe, that by far the greater part were still compelled to obey the officers who had enslaved them, under the pretence that they were not Americans. Had we tamely submitted under such a grievance, we indeed deserved to be the slaves of George the third, of Napoleon, or any other monarch, and our posterity would have blushed to be called Americans.

It has been mentioned, that Great Britain had declined the Russian mediation, under the flimsy pretext of being unwilling to submit her rights to the decision of an umpire, although nothing of the kind was proposed, the interference of the emperor of Russia extending no further than bringing the parties together. The prince regent, however, offered a direct negotiation at London or Gotteaburgh; this was no sooner made known to our government, than accepted: and in addition to the commissioners who were already in Europe, under the Russian mediation, the president nominated Henry Clay, Jonathan Russel, and Albert Gallatin, as commissioners of peace; and who soon after left this country for Gottenburg. Little more was expected, however, from this, than to show the sincerity of the United States, in desiring peace; but the conduct of Great Britain already proved; that her only wish was to keep open a door for a treaty when necessity should compel her to assent to it. Subsequent transactions sufficiently prove, that her rejection of the Russian mediation was a pitiful excuse for delay.

Notwithstanding the intemperate opposition on the floor of congress, the war was evidently gaining ground; the conduct of the enemy, in the prosecution of hostilities, was such as to awaken the feelings of every American; and the rejection of the Russian mediation staggered many, who confidently predicted its prompt acceptance. The victories, which we had obtained at sea, came home to the feelings of the whole nation, and were claimed exclusively by the opposition, as having always been the best friends to the navy. The British actually complained, that those whom she considered her friends in America, should rejoice in her misfortunes; and accused them of faithlessness and inconstancy, because they permitted their love of country to overcome their hatred for the men in power. But this was a delightful proof of nationality, such as might have been expected from Britain herself, or from France, though not from a nation so recently composed of independent jarring states, not yet perfectly cemented. It becomes every virtuous man to rejoice in the good fortune of his country,

however he may dislike the present rulers. This sentiment was gradually gaining ground; the warlike appearances every where displayed, interested the ardent minds of the young and enterprising, and the feats of arms daily recounted, awakened the desire of being distinguished. The contagion of military pursuits was rapidly spreading. The habits of a people, who had been thirty years at peace, and constantly occupied in their industrious avocations, could not be changed suddenly. But man is every where by nature warlike, and cannot exist long in the midst of martial scenes and preparations, without catching their spirit. It would not have been difficult to predict, that the foreign enemy, which was at first regarded only as the enemy of a party, would soon become the enemy of the country.

CHAPTER XIII.

The southern war—Massacre of fort Mims—Expedition of general Jackson and general Cocke—Battle of Talledega—Indians surprised by general Cocke—Expedition of general Floyd—Critical situation of general Jackson—Defeat of the Indians—The Creeks totally defeated at the Horse-shoe-bend—General Jackson terminates the Creek war, and dictates a peace.

OUR affairs in the southward, the reader will recollect, had assumed a serious aspect, and no sooner had the northern armies retired into winter quarters, than the publick attention was kept alive, by the interesting events which transpired in the country of the Creeks, during the winter. That ill fated people had at length declared open war.

In consequence of the threatening appearances to the south, and the hostilities which already prevailed with the Indians inhabiting the Spanish territory, governour Mitchell, of Georgia, was required by the secretary at war, to detach a brigade to the Oakmulgee river, for the purpose of covering the frontier settlements of the state.

Governour Holmes of the Mississippi territory, was at the same time ordered to join a body of militia to the volunteers under general Claiborne, then stationed on the Mobile. In the course of the summer, the settlers in the vicinity of that river, became so much alarmed from the hostile deportment of the Creeks, that the greater part abandoned their plantations, and sought refuge in the different forts; while the peace party amongst the Creeks, had in some places, shut themselves up in forts, and were besieged by their countrymen.

The commencement of hostilities was witnessed by one of the most shocking massacres, that can be found in the history of our Indian wars. The settlers, from an imperfect idea of their danger, had adopted an erroneous mode of defence, by throwing themselves into small forts or stations, at great distances from each other, on the various branches of the Mobile. Early in August it was ascertained, that the Indians intended to make an attack upon all these stations, and destroy them in detail. The first place which they would attempt, would probably be fort Mims, in which the greatest number of families had been collected. Towards the latter part of August, information was brought that the Indians were about to make an attack on this post, but unfortunately too little attention was paid to the warning. During the momentary continuance of the alarm, some preparations were made for defence, but it seems that it was almost impossible to rouse them from their unfortunate disbelief of the proximity of their danger. The fort was commanded by major Beasley, of the Mississippi territory, (a brave officer, and as a private citizen highly respected,) with about a hundred volunteers under his command. By some fatality, notwithstanding the warnings he had received, he was not sufficiently on his guard, and suffered himself to be surprised on the thirtieth, at noon-day. The sentinel had scarcely time to notify the approach of the Indians, when they rushed, with a dreadful yell, towards the gate, which was wide open; the garrison was instantly under arms, and the major flew towards the gate, with some of his men, in order to close it, and if possible expel the enemy; but he soon after fell mortally

wounded. The gate was at length closed, after great slaughter on both sides; but a number of the Indians had taken possession of a block-house, from which they were expelled, after a bloody contest, by captain Jack. The assault was still continued for an hour, on the outside of the pickets; the port holes were several times carried by the assailants, and retaken by those within the fort.

The Indians now for a moment withdrew, apparently disheartened by their loss, but on being harangued by their chief Weatherford, they returned with augmented fury to the assault; having procured axes, they proceeded to cut down the gate, and at the same time made a breach in the pickets, and possessing themselves of the area of the fort, compelled the besieged to take refuge in the houses. Here they made a gallant resistance, but the Indians at length setting fire to the roofs, the situation of these unfortunate people became altogether hopeless. The agonizing shrieks of the unfortunate women and children at their unhappy fate, would have awakened pity in the breasts of tygers; it is only by those who have some faint idea of the nature of Indian warfare, that the horror of their situation can be conceived. The terror of the scene had already been sufficient to have bereft them of their senses; but what heart does not bleed at the recital of its realities. Not a soul was spared by these monsters; from the most aged person to the youngest infant, they became the victims of indiscriminate butchery; and some, to avoid a worse fate, even rushed into the flames. A few only escaped by leaping over the pickets, while the Indians were engaged in the work of massacre. About two hundred and sixty persons of all ages, and sexes, thus perished, including some friendly Indians, and about one hundred negroes. The panick caused at the other posts, or stations, by this dreadful catastrophe, can scarcely be described; the wretched inhabitants, fearing a similar fate abandoned their retreats of fancied security in the middle of the night, and in their endeavours to escape to Mobile, encountered every species of suffering. The dwellings of these settlers, (who were probably as numerous as the whole tribe of Creeks,) were burnt, and their cattle destroyed. Savage man is little

better than a wild beast; it is unaccountable how some feel a compassion for such men, and can regard unmoved, the horrors which they habitually perpetrate against foes of every kind. Could these people complain of our having injured them? Never was there a foot of ground taken from them; and besides, according to their own tradition, it is not a century since they possessed themselves of the country, by extirpating the right owners; nothing but the basest ingratitude could have actuated them, under the instigations of our no less cruel enemy.

On the receipt of this disastrous intelligence, the Tennessee militia, under the orders of general Jackson and general Cocke, immediately marched to the country of the Creeks. On the second of November general Coffee was detached, with nine hundred men, against the Tal-lushatches towns, and reached the place about day-light the next morning. The Indians, apprised of his approach, were prepared to receive him. Within a short distance of the village the enemy charged upon him, with a boldness seldom displayed by Indians. They were repulsed, and after the most obstinate resistance, in which they would receive no quarters, they were slain almost to a man, and their women and children taken prisoners. There were nearly two hundred of their warriors killed in this affair. The loss of the Americans was five killed and forty wounded.

Late in the morning of the seventh, a friendly Indian brought intelligence to general Jackson, that about thirty miles below his camp, there were a number of Creeks collected at a place called Talledega, where they were engaged in besieging a number of friendly Indians, who must inevitably perish unless speedily relieved. This officer, whose resolutions were as rapidly executed as they were formed, marched at twelve o'clock the same night, at the head of twelve hundred men, and arrived within six miles of the place the next evening. At midnight he again advanced, by seven o'clock was within a mile of the enemy, and immediately made the most judicious arrangements for surrounding them. Having approached in this manner almost unperceived, within eighty yards of the Indians, the battle commenced on their part

with great fury, but being repulsed on all sides, they attempted to make their escape, but soon found themselves enclosed; two companies having at first given way, a space was left through which a considerable number of the enemy escaped, and were pursued to the mountains with great slaughter. In this action the American loss was fifteen killed and eighty wounded. That of the Creeks was little short of three hundred; their whole force exceeded a thousand.

General Cocke, who commanded the other division of the Tennessee militia, on the eleventh detached general White from fort Armstrong, where he was encamped, against the hostile towns on the Tallapoose river. After marching the whole night of the seventeenth, he surprised a town at day-light, containing upwards of three hundred warriors, sixty of whom were killed and the rest taken prisoners. Having burnt several of their villages which had been deserted, he returned on the twenty-third, without losing a single man.

The Georgia militia, under general Floyd, advanced into the Creek country, about the last of the month. Receiving information that a great number of Indians were collected at the Autossee towns, on the Tallapoose river, a place which they called their beloved ground, and where, according to their prophets, no white man could molest them, general Floyd, placing himself at the head of nine hundred militia, and four hundred friendly Creeks, marched from his encampment on the Chatahouchie. On the evening of the twenty-eighth, he encamped within ten miles of the place, and resuming his march at one o'clock, reached the towns about six, and commenced an attack upon both at the same moment. His troops were met by the Indians with uncommon bravery; and it was not until after an obstinate resistance, that they were forced, by his musketry and bayonets, to fly to the thickets and copses in the rear of the towns. In the course of three hours the enemy was completely defeated, and the villages in flames. Eleven Americans were killed and fifty wounded, among the latter the general himself: of the enemy, it is supposed that, besides the Autossee and Tallassee kings, upwards of two hundred were killed.

This just retribution, it was hoped, would bring these wretched creatures to a proper sense of their situations; but unfortunately it had not this effect, they still persisted in their hostilities against us. In the month of December, general Claiborne marched a detachment against the towns of Eccanachaca, on the Alabama river. On the twenty-second, he came suddenly upon them, killed thirty of their warriors, and after destroying their villages, returned with a trifling loss.

After the battle of Talladege, general Jackson was left with but a handful of men, in consequence of the term of service of the militia having expired. On the fourteenth of January he was fortunately reinforced by eight hundred volunteers from Tennessee, and soon after by several hundred friendly Indians. He was also joined by general Coffee with a number of officers, his militia having returned home. On the seventeenth, with a view of making a diversion in favour of general Floyd, and at the same time of relieving fort Armstrong, which was said to be threatened, he penetrated the Indian country. On the evening of the twenty-first, believing himself, from appearances, in the vicinity of a large body of Indians, he encamped with great precaution, and placed himself in the best attitude of defence. Some time in the night, one of his spies brought information that he had seen the enemy a few miles off, and from their being busily engaged in sending away their women and children, it was evident they had discovered the Americans, and would either escape or make an attack before morning. While the troops were in this state of readiness, they were vigorously attacked on their left flank about daylight; the enemy was resisted with firmness, and after a severe contest, they fled in every direction. This was, however, soon discovered to be a feint; general Coffee having been detached with four hundred men, to destroy the enemy's camp, with directions not to attack it, if strongly fortified, returned with information that it would not be prudent to attempt it without artillery; a half an hour had scarcely elapsed, when the enemy commenced a fierce attack on Jackson's left flank. It seems they had intended, by the first onset,

to draw the Americans into a pursuit, and by that means create a confusion; but this was completely prevented by Jackson's causing his left flank to keep its position. General Coffee, with about fifty of his officers, acting as volunteers, assailed the Indians on the left, while about two hundred friendly Indians came upon them on the right. The whole line giving them one fire, resolutely charged; and the enemy being disappointed in their plan, fled with precipitation. On the left flank of the Indians the contest was kept up some time longer; general Coffee was severely wounded, and his aid, A. Donaldson, killed; on being reinforced by a party of the friendly Indians, he compelled the enemy to fly, leaving fifty of their warriors on the ground.

General Jackson, being apprehensive of another attack, fortified his camp for the night; the next day, fearing a want of provisions, he found it necessary to retreat, and before night reached Enotachopco, having passed a dangerous defile without interruption. In the morning he had to cross a defile still more dangerous, where he might expect that the enemy had formed an ambuscade; he therefore determined to pass at some other point. The most judicious arrangements having been made for the disposition of his force in case of attack, he moved forward towards the pass which he had selected. The front guard, with part of the flank columns, together with the wounded, had scarcely crossed the creek, when the alarm was given in the rear. Jackson immediately gave orders for his right and left columns to wheel on their pivot, and crossing the stream above and below, assail the flanks and rear of the enemy, and thus completely enclose them. But, to his astonishment and mortification, when the word was given for these columns to form, and a few guns were fired, they precipitately gave way. This unaccountable flight had well nigh proved fatal: it drew along with it the greater part of the centre column, leaving not more than twenty-five men, who being formed by colonel Carrol, maintained their ground for a time against overwhelming numbers. All that could now be opposed to the enemy, were the few who remained of the rear guard, the artillery company, and captain Rupel's com-

pany of spies. Their conduct, however, was admirable. Lieutenant Armstrong, with the utmost coolness and intrepidity, dragged, with the assistance of a few more, the six pounder up the hill, although exposed to a heavy fire; and having gained his position, loaded the piece with grape, and fired it with such effect, that after a few discharges, the enemy was repulsed. The Indians were pursued for several miles, by colonel Carrol, colonel Higgins, and captains Elliot and Pipkins. Captain Gordon, of the spies, had partly succeeded in turning their flanks, and by this impetuous charge, contributed greatly to restore the day. The Americans now continued their march without further molestation. In these different engagements, about twenty Americans were killed and seventy-five wounded; in the last about one hundred and eighty of the Creeks were slain.

Meanwhile general Floyd was advancing towards the Indian territory, from the Chatahouchie river. On the twenty-seventh of January his camp was attacked by a large body of Indians, about an hour before day. They stole upon the centinels, fired upon them, and then rushed with great impetuosity towards the line. The action soon became general; the front of both flanks was closely pressed, but the firmness of the officers and men repelled their assaults at every point. As soon as it became sufficiently light, general Floyd strengthened his right-wing, and formed his cavalry in the rear, then directed a charge; the enemy were driven before the bayonet, and being pursued by the cavalry, many of them were killed. The loss of general Floyd was seventeen killed and one hundred and thirty-two wounded. That of the Indians could not be ascertained; thirty-seven of their warriors were left dead on the field, but it is thought their loss was very considerable.

By this time, it might be supposed that the Creeks had been satisfied with the experiment of war, but they appear to have been infatuated in a most extraordinary degree. From the influence of their prophets over their superstitious minds, they were lead on from one ruinous effort to another, in hopes that the time would at last arrive, when their enemies would be delivered into their

hands. General Jackson having received considerable reinforcements from Tennessee, and being joined by a number of friendly Indians, set out on an expedition to the Tallapoose river. He proceeded from the Coose on the twenty-fourth of March, reached the southern extremity of the New Youca on the twenty-seventh, at a place called the Horse-shoe-bend of the Coose. Nature furnishes few situations so eligible for defence, and here the Creeks, by the direction of their prophets, had made their last stand. Across the neck of land they had erected a breastwork of the greatest compactness and strength, from five to eight feet high, and provided with a double row of port-holes artfully arranged. In this place they considered themselves perfectly secure; the assailants could not approach without being exposed to a double and cross fire from the Indians who lay behind. The area thus enclosed by the breastworks, was little short of one hundred acres. The warriors from Oakfuskee, Oakshaya, Hilebees, the Fish Ponds, and Eupata towns, had collected their force at this place, in number exceeding a thousand.

Early in the morning of the twenty-seventh general Jackson having encamped the preceding night within six miles of the bend, detached general Coffee, with the mounted men and nearly the whole of the Indian force, to pass the river at a ford about three miles below their encampment, and to surround the bend in such a manner, that none of them should escape by attempting to cross the river. With the remainder of his force, general Jackson advanced to the point of the breastwork, and at half past ten, planted his artillery on a small eminence within eighty yards of the nearest point of the work, and within two hundred and fifty of the farthest. A brisk cannonade was opened upon the centre, and a severe fire was kept up with musketry and rifles, when the Indians ventured to show themselves behind their defences. In the meantime, general Coffee having crossed below, had advanced towards the village; when within half a mile of that which stood at the extremity of the peninsula, the Indians gave their yell; Coffee expecting an immediate attack, drew up his men in order of battle, and in this manner

continued to move forward. The friendly Indians had previously taken possession of the bank, for the purpose of preventing the retreat of the enemy; but they no sooner heard the artillery of Jackson, and the approach of Coffee, than they rushed forward to the banks; while the militia, apprehending an attack from the Oakfuskee villages, were obliged to remain in order of battle. The friendly Indians, unable to remain silent spectators, began to fire across the stream, about one hundred yards wide, while some plunged into the river, and swimming across, brought back a number of canoes; in these the greater part embarked, landed on the peninsula, then advanced into the village, drove the enemy from their huts up to the fortifications, and continued to annoy them during the whole action. This movement of the Indians, rendered it necessary that a part of Coffee's line should take their place.

General Jackson finding that his arrangements were complete, at length yielded to the earnest solicitations of his men to be led to the charge. The regular troops led by colonel Williams and major Montgomery, were in a moment in possession of the nearest part of the breast-works: the militia accompanied them with equal firmness and intrepidity. Having maintained for a few minutes a very obstinate contest, muzzle to muzzle through the port-holes, they succeeded in gaining the opposite side of the works. The event could no longer be doubtful; the enemy, although many of them fought with that kind of bravery which desperation inspires, were cut to pieces. The whole margin of the river, which surrounded the peninsula, was strewed with the slain. Five hundred and fifty-seven were found, besides those thrown into the river by their friends, or drowned in attempting to escape. Not more than fifty could have escaped. Among the slain was their great prophet Manahoe, and two others of less note. About three hundred women and children were taken prisoners. Jackson's loss was twenty-six white men killed, and one hundred and seven wounded; eighteen Cherokees killed and thirty-six wounded; and five friendly Creeks killed and eleven wounded.

This most decisive victory put an end to the Creek war. The spirit and power of these misguided men were

completely broken; Jackson soon after scoured the countries on the Coose and Tallapoose; a party of the enemy, on the latter river, on his approach, fled to Pensacola. The greater part of the Creeks now came forward and threw themselves on the mercy of the victors. A detachment of militia from North and South Carolina, under the command of colonel Pearson, scoured the country on the Alabama, and received the submission of a great number of Creek warriors and their prophets.

In the course of the summer a treaty of peace was dictated to them by Jackson, on severe but just terms. They agreed to yield a portion of their country as an indemnity for the expenses of the war; they conceded the privilege of opening roads through their country, together with the liberty of navigating their rivers; they also stipulated to hold no intercourse with any British or Spanish post, or garrison, and to deliver up the property they had taken from whites or friendly Indians. The general, on the part of the United States, undertook to guarantee their territory, to restore all their prisoners, and in consideration of their destitute situation, to furnish them gratuitously with the necessaries of life, until they could provide for themselves. They also engaged to establish trading houses, and endeavour to bring back the nation to their former state.

It is truly distressing to contemplate the ruin of these tribes, who were making such rapid advances to civilization. Their villages were entirely destroyed, and their herds, which had become numerous, were killed by themselves at an early part of the contest. It is to be hoped, they will be restored to their former prosperity, though their experience has been dearly bought.

CHAPTER XIV.

General Wilkinson retires to Plattsburg—General Brown marches to the Niagara frontier—Affair of La Colle—Exertions of commodore McDonough to create a naval force—Contest for superiority on Lake Ontario—Attack of Oswego—Death of colonel Forsythe—Colonel Campbell's expedition—Gallant defence of captain Holmes—Serious crisis in the state of our affairs—Commodore Hardy invades the northern sea-coast—Takes possession of Eastport and Castine—Gallant defence of Stonington.

AFTER the failure of the campaign against the British provinces, the northern army remained in winter quarters, without any material occurrence, until towards the latter end of February. General Wilkinson had submitted several plans of attack, on the different British posts in his vicinity, with a view of cutting off the communication between Upper and Lower Canada; these, however, did not meet the approbation of the secretary at war: who gave orders that the American force should be withdrawn from its present position, and stationed at Plattsburgh; and that two thousand men should be marched under general Brown to Sackett's Harbour, with a proportion of field artillery and battering cannon. The general, in obedience to these orders, after destroying his barracks, retired to the place appointed. The British, apprised of his movements, detached a large force under colonel Scott, of the 103d, who destroyed the publick stores, and pillaged the private citizens, but on hearing of the approach of an American force, retreated in the most precipitate manner. The whole party suffered much from a severe snow storm, besides losing upwards of two hundred deserters. It is about this time, that desertions became one of the serious difficulties which the enemy had to encounter: their custom of permitting their soldiery to plunder in almost every instance, may perhaps have arisen from the necessity of indulging them in this, as one method of retaining them in their service.

Towards the latter end of March, general Wilkinson determined to erect a battery at a place called Rouse's point, where his engineer had discovered a position from

which the enemy's fleet, then laid up at St. John's, might be kept in check. The ice breaking up on lake Champlain sooner than usual, defeated his plan; a body of the enemy, upwards of two thousand strong, on discovering his design had been collected at La Colle mill, three miles from Rouse's point, for the purpose of opposing him. With a view of dislodging this party, and at the same time of forming a diversion in favour of general Brown, who had marched against Niagara, the commander-in-chief, at the head of about four thousand men, crossed the Canada lines, on the thirtieth of March. After dispersing several of the enemy's skirmishing parties, he reached La Colle mill, a large fortified stone house, at which major Hancock commanded. An eighteen pounder was ordered up, but owing to the nature of the ground over which it had to pass, the transportation was found impracticable; a twelve pounder and a five inch howitzer, were therefore substituted. These pieces, under the direction of captain M'Pherson, and lieutenants Larabee and Sheldon, were posted at the distance of two hundred paces from the house, and covered by the second brigade, with part of colonel Clark's command, under general Smith, on the right; and the third brigade under general Bissel, on the left. Colonel Miller was ordered to take a position with the twelfth and thirteenth regiments, in order to cut off the enemy's retreat; while the reserve, composed of four select corps of the first brigade, was placed under the command of general M'Comb. These arrangements being made, the battery opened upon the house, and the fire was promptly returned. The different corps were greatly exposed to the fire from the house; it was found impossible to effect a breach, although the guns were managed with great skill. Captain M'Pherson was wounded at the commencement of the attack, but continued notwithstanding at his post, until a second shot had broken his thigh; his next officer, Larabee, was shot through the lungs; lieutenant Sheldon kept up the fire until the end of the affair, and behaved in a manner which drew forth the praise of his general.

The British commander, perceiving that the Americans persisted in bombarding the house, made a desperate

sortie, and several times charged upon the cannon, in which he was repulsed by the covering troops, and compelled to retire to his fortress with loss. It being now found impracticable to make an impression on this strong building, whose walls were of unusual thickness, the commander-in-chief, calling in his different parties, fell back in good order. The loss of the Americans in this affair, was upwards of one hundred and forty in killed and wounded, that of the British is not ascertained. The unfortunate issue of this affair, and the failure in the last campaign, brought general Wilkinson into disrepute with the publick. One great fault inherent in the nature of our government, is the hasty and harsh decision respecting the conduct and character of men; it no more ceases to be injustice when committed by ten millions, than if by ten individuals. Men are often ruined in publick estimation, for slight causes, or for uncontrollable accidents; and they are as often elevated to the highest pinnacle of celebrity, for actions which may be better considered the effect of chance, than the test of merit. The administration, yielding to the popular voice, thought proper to suspend him from the command, and the army was left under general Izard. General Wilkinson was afterwards tried and honourably acquitted of all the charges alleged against him.

The most discouraging difficulties presented themselves in the economy, equipment, and government of the American forces, to the very last hour of the war. The severity of the climate on the borders of the St. Lawrence and the lakes, to which our tyros were frequently exposed, and their want of knowledge and experience to render themselves comfortable in camp, were the causes of fatal diseases, which carried off a greater number than fell in battle. The proportion of sick and unfit for duty was at all times very great. From the want of that system, regularity and strictness, which belong to old establishments, there existed at one moment a superabundance of all the necessary munitions, and at another, as great a scarcity. There was no end to the irregular and unforeseen expenses, which the government was constantly called upon to incur. The most vexatious abuses were practised in every

subordinate department, and which baffled every effort to reform. All this must be attributed to the true cause; to our settled habits of peace, and to the slowness with which the organization of military establishments, must ever be effected under a constitution like ours. We had yet to learn and put in practice, the endless minutiae of the police of the camp, which varies according to a thousand circumstances. We had no regular soldiers until almost the close of the war. How could we expect that they should be formed? Our subalterns were at first, generally men of little education of any kind, and required themselves the instruction which they undertook to give.

To these unavoidable misfortunes, we have to add the disgraceful conduct of many of the frontier inhabitants, who continued regularly to supply the enemy with every thing of which they stood in want. In spite of every exertion to prevent it, a constant intercourse was kept up across the Canada line, and the British were not only furnished with immense quantities of provisions, without which they could not have subsisted their armies, but were also regularly informed of every thing which transpired on the American side.

Shortly after the affair of La Colle, the greater part of the British force was collected at St. John's, and Isle Aux Noix, for the purpose of securing the entrance of the squadron into lake Champlain, on the breaking up of the ice. This was effected early in May. Sometime before this, on the suggestion of general Wilkinson, commodore M'Donough had fortified the mouth of Otter river, so as to secure a passage for his flotilla, which then lay at Vergennes, higher up the river, waiting for its armament. This precaution proved of great service. The commodore had laboured, with indefatigable industry, to provide a naval force on this lake, to cope with that of the enemy: the vessels had been built during the autumn and winter, but their armament did not arrive before spring. The first object of the enemy, when they found the navigation open, was to attempt the destruction of the fleet, before it could move upon its element prepared to meet them. On the twelfth of May, not long after the erection of the battery on the cape, at the entrance of

the river, a bomb vessel and eight large gallies were stationed by the enemy across the creek, for the purpose of blockading the squadron, and at the same time to intercept naval supplies, which it was supposed would be sent by water, for the purpose of completing its armament. Captain Thornton of the light artillery, and lieutenant Cassin, with a number of sailors, were ordered to the defence of the battery. Indications being at the same time discovered of an attempt by the enemy to assail the battery in the rear, general Davis, of the Vermont militia, called out part of his brigade, in order to oppose the landing. At day-break on the fourteenth, the enemy commenced an attack upon the works, but were so effectually resisted, that they were compelled to withdraw from their position with the loss of two gallies, which they were obliged to abandon. Soon after, the whole squadron moved down the lake, but not without some skirmishing with general Wright of the militia, as they passed Burlington. Commodore M'Donough had attempted to bring some of the American vessels to the mouth of the river, but the British squadron had disappeared before he could attain his object.

While the naval preparations were making on lake Champlain, the winter and spring were taken up with the preparations for a contest for superiority on lake Ontario. The British converted it, however, into a contest in building the greatest number and the largest ships. At Kingston, a ship of extraordinary size was building; for the enemy no longer trusted, as they had done with other nations, to superior seamanship and valour. Commodore Chauncey was under the necessity of building additional vessels, for the purpose of maintaining as nearly as possible an equality of force. The enemy was, however, not satisfied with endeavouring to conquer us in ship building, they made numerous attempts to destroy by insidious means, those already built by the Americans. On the twenty-fifth of April, three of the enemy's boats, provided with the means of blowing up the vessels, succeeded in getting close into Sackett's Harbour undiscovered; but before they could execute their purpose, they were detected and fired upon by lieutenant Dudley, the

officer of the guard, on which they threw their powder into the lake, and pulled off. Failing in all these attempts, from the vigilance of the Americans, they next formed the determination to intercept the naval stores on their way from Oswego, where they had been deposited. Hither sir James proceeded with his whole fleet, and having on board a large body of troops under general Drummond, proceeded on the fifth of May, with the determination of storming the town and capturing the equipments destined for the new vessels. The British commenced a heavy bombardment, which was kept up for several days; the unexpected and gallant resistance of the garrison, consisting of three hundred men under lieutenant colonel Mitchell, was in vain against such superior force. The schooner Growler, then in Oswego creek to receive the cannon, was sunk to prevent her from being taken, and all the tents that could be procured were pitched on the village side, to give the appearance of a large force of militia. The sailors of the Growler, under lieutenant Pearce, were added to the garrison; the shore battery was commanded by captain Boyle, seconded by lieutenant Legate. At one o'clock, fifteen barges filled with troops, moved towards the shore, preceded by several gunboats, while a heavy cannonade was commenced by the larger vessels. They were so warmly received by the battery on the shore, that the boats were twice repulsed, and one of the largest fell into the hands of the Americans.

The squadron now stood off, but this was evidently for the purpose of renewing the attack, in such a manner as to render it effectual. They again approached on the sixth, having resolved to land under cover of their ships; they accordingly kept up a heavy fire for three hours, while their land forces, two thousand in number, under general De Watteville, succeeded in gaining the shore, after being gallantly opposed by lieutenant Pearce and his seamen. Colonel Mitchell now abandoned the fort, and joining his corps to the marines and seamen, engaged the enemy's flank, and did great execution. Finding further resistance useless, he fell back, formed his troops, and took up his march to the falls of Oswego.

destroying the bridges in his rear. Hitherto, to the inexpressible disappointment of the British, the naval stores had already been removed, and all their trouble, and the loss which they sustained, procured them nothing more than a few barrels of provisions and some whiskey. This was purchased with a loss of two hundred and thirty-five men, in killed and wounded; they were certainly entitled to the victory, but they never thought proper to claim it. The loss of the Americans was sixty-nine in killed, wounded and missing; among the first, a promising officer, lieutenant Blaney.

On the evening of the same day, a part of this force proceeded to Pultneyville, and demanded the publick stores. The inhabitants were unable to repel the invaders, who indulged themselves in their usual depredations; when general Swift, of the New-York militia, opportunely arriving, with a part of his brigade, put them to flight. The British soon after, hearing that the *Superiour*, which had lately been launched, had received her equipments from the interior, broke up the blockade, and returned to Kingston. Another new ship, the *Mohawk*, was at this time on the stocks, and as she would have to be supplied with her equipments from the same place, it was determined, since the British had disappeared, to transport them by water; and avoid the expense and delay of land transportation. To deceive the enemy, who had numerous gunboats hovering about the different creeks, a report was circulated that it was intended to forward the stores to the Oneida lake. Nineteen barges were loaded at Oswego, and major Appling was despatched by general Gaines, with a detachment to aid captain Woolsey, in their defence. On the twenty-eighth of May, captain Woolsey, finding the coast clear, reached the village of Oswego by sunset, and taking advantage of the darkness of the night, put into the lake. The next day they reached Sandy creek, and ascending it a few miles, despatched a boat to look out for the British on the lake; this boat was discovered by some gun vessels, and immediately chased. Major Appling and captain Woolsey determined to draw them into an ambuscade. As had been anticipated, the enemy push-

ed their gunboats and cutters up the creek, while a party landed and ascended along the bank. The Americans now suddenly rushed upon them, and in a few moments, after one fire, by which a number of them were killed and wounded, the whole party was taken prisoners, consisting of four lieutenants of the navy, two lieutenants of marines, and one hundred and thirty men, together with all their boats and cutters. Major Appling, for this affair, was breveted, and his officers, lieutenants Smith, M'Intosh, Calhoun, M'Farland, and Armstrong, and ensign Austin, were publickly thanked. The conduct of captain Woolsey and his officers was not less applauded. A party of Oneida Indians had joined the Americans in this affair, and were the first to reach the British, after their surrender; these were about to commence the mode of warfare practised by the Anglo Indians, at the river Raisin, Lewistown, and Tuscarora, but were compelled, greatly to their displeasure, to desist.* The barges soon after arrived at Sackett's Harbour in safety.

The consequences of this affair, were severely felt by the British; they lost a number of their best seamen and officers, and commodore Chauncey was once more master of the lake. He accordingly sailed out, and several times presented himself before Kingston, but sir James did not think it prudent to stir out, until his large ship of one hundred and twelve guns, then on the stocks, should be completed. This mode of warfare was exceedingly expensive, but more to the British than to the Americans; it is ascertained that it cost the former more than twice what was expended by the Americans; in consequence of their greater difficulties of transportation.

No event of any consequence transpired in this quarter until late in the summer, save a skirmish, which was rendered important by the death of that active though ec-

* The chief, on this occasion, expressed himself in this manner. "When British come Buffaloe, they kill white man, they kill Indian, they kill woman, they burn all house.—When British come here, you no let Indian kill him—you give eat—dis no good."

centrick partizan officer, colonel Forsythe, who had been a terrour to the British. Having made an incursion as far at Odelltown, he attacked a party of the enemy, and retreated with a view of drawing them into an ambuscade; but not completely succeeding, a severe skirmish ensued, in which seventeen of the enemy were killed, among their number the celebrated partizan officer captain Malloux, a Canadian, who was shot by lieutenant Riley. After the death of Forsythe, the command devolved on major Appling.

General Brown had, in the meantime, reached the Niagara frontier, and it was expected that the enemy would be immediately expelled from the American territory; but his situation did not permit the attempt, and with the exception of a few partial encounters, tranquillity prevailed along the Niagara frontier during the summer. It would be improper to pass over in silence, however, an affair which took place in this quarter. Colonel Campbell crossed the lake from Erie, with about five hundred men, and landing at Dover, a small village on the Canada side, proceeded to destroy the mills, together with the greater part of the private dwellings. The expedition was undertaken without orders, and as his conduct in this affair, though otherwise a meritorious officer, was greatly reprobated, a court of inquiry, at which general Scott presided, was instituted. The court decided, that the destruction of the distilleries and mills might be justified by the usages of war, as they furnished the British troops with their necessary supplies; but with respect to the other part of his conduct, although excused in some measure by the example of the enemy, in the destruction of the villages on the Niagara, it was nevertheless condemned. In the opinion of the court, "acts of retaliation on the part of a nation, proud of its rights, and conscious of their power of maintaining them, should reluctantly be resorted to, and only by instructions from the highest authority." The improper conduct of colonel Campbell was mitigated by his humane treatment to the defenceless part of the inhabitants, to the women and children, in which he did not follow the example of the British.

To the westward, but little of moment transpired during the remainder of the war, being once more in quiet possession of all our territory except Michilimackinac. Early in the spring, however, intelligence was received by colonel Butler, who commanded at Detroit, that a considerable body of regulars, Indians, and militia, was collected at the river Thames. Captain Lee, with a party of mounted men, was sent to reconnoitre, and succeeded in gaining the rear of the British forces unobserved, and making prisoners of several officers; among the rest, of colonel Baubee, who had commanded a party of Indians in their depredations on the New-York frontier.

A gallant affair was soon after achieved by captain Holmes, a youth of the most promising talents, and brother to the governour of the Mississippi territory. With a party of about one hundred and sixty rangers and mounted men, he proceeded on the twenty-first of February against some of the enemy's posts. About the beginning of March, he received intelligence, that a British force, which afterwards proved to be double his own, was descending the river Thames. Captain Holmes, finding himself not in a situation to give battle, from the fatigue which his men had already encountered, and his ignorance of the strength of the enemy's party, fell back a few miles, and chose a strong position, where he was confident of being able to defend himself, until he could obtain the necessary information of the British. He despatched a small body of rangers for this purpose, but which soon returned, pursued by the enemy, but without being able to learn his strength. The British perceiving the strength of captain Holmes' position, resorted to stratagem for the purpose of drawing him from it. They feigned an attack, and then retreated, taking care not to show more than sixty or seventy men: captain Holmes now pursued, but with caution; and after proceeding about five miles, discovered their main body drawn up to receive him, on which he immediately returned to his former position. Having disposed his troops in the most judicious manner, he firmly waited for them; being protected in front by a deep ravine, and

the approaches on the other sides somewhat difficult. The attack was commenced at the same moment on every point, with savage yells, and the sound of bugles, the regulars charging up the heights from the ravine; the other sides were rapidly assailed by militia and Indians. The first approached within twenty paces of the American line, against a very destructive fire; but the front section being cut to pieces, those who followed severely wounded, and many of their officers cut down, they retired to the woods, within thirty or forty paces, and the firing continued with great spirit on both sides. The American regulars being uncovered, were ordered to kneel, that the brow of the heights might assist in screening them from the enemy; but the enemy's covering was insufficient, a single tree affording no shelter even to one, from the extended line of the Americans, much less to the squads that stood together. On the other sides, the attack was sustained with equal coolness, and with considerable loss to the foe; the Americans had, on three sides, thrown together some logs hastily, and no charge being made, they could aim their pieces at leisure, with that deadly certainty, which belongs to the backwoodsman. The British, after an hour of hard fighting, ordered a retreat, and as the night approached, captain Holmes thought it not advisable to pursue: besides, his men were much fatigued, and many of them had nearly worn out their shoes on the hard frozen ground. The American loss on this occasion did not amount to more than six killed and wounded. According to the statement of the British, their loss was sixty-five killed and wounded, besides Indians. In consequence of his good conduct, on this affair, captain Holmes was promoted to the rank of major.

Hitherto nothing of moment had occurred, which could have much influence on the final result of the war. On the ocean, it had been glorious for us; on the lakes and on the frontier, our arms during the last year, had retrieved our former disgraces; and on the sea-coast, the enemy had discovered that it was not an easy matter to make an impression. It is true, the disastrous issue of the campaign against Canada, took away all hope of being able to make an impression on that province, under

present circumstances; but the happy termination of the Indian war to the westward, and its success to the south, in some degree afforded a consolation. An important crisis, however, had arrived in the general state of our affairs. The third year of the war found the situation of this country materially changed. The most disheartening periods of the revolution scarcely presented a state of things more painfully embarrassing. The distress of the northern states, whose subsistence, in a great measure, depended upon their shipping, and those of the people of the south, whose staples had almost ceased to be of any value, together with embarrassments of the banks in the middle states, had begun, at last, to make us feel that we were at war. To a people who had been for years in the most flourishing state, a check to their prosperity, however it might result to their ultimate good, was felt as a positive affliction. To the great body of the farmers, in the interior of the country, the effects of hostilities were rather beneficial; their produce was raised in price, and their lands in value; the wealth of the cities, no longer applied to commerce, was diverted to the interior, and was soon discovered in the improvement of the lands, the increase of the inland towns, and the establishment of manufactures. But the number of those, whom the war distressed or ruined, was proportionally great; and as men are more loud in crying out against calamities, than forward in displaying their good fortune, the unfavourable side of the picture only was exhibited. The philosopher might say, that what was lost to the nation, on the one side, was gained in the other; but this reasoning could have little weight with the individual sufferers. In several of the New England states, complaints assumed a more serious cast; a convention was talked of, and it was even insinuated, that they meant to secede from the union. This, indeed, would have been an event, which would have filled every American bosom with grief; a greater injury to our common country than a thousand wars. The collisions between the state authorities and that of the union, were beginning to produce all the embarrassments, which had been predicted by Patrick Henry at the formation of the constitution. The supposed existence of such a temper,

at the period of our utmost need, could not fail to weaken the hands of the administration, and increase the disposition of England to prosecute the war. The embarrassments in our financial system were alarming, and it was confidently predicted, that from a want of funds, the administration would be compelled to yield up the reins of government, or throw the nation upon the mercy of the enemy.

A new event had occurred in Europe, which could not be viewed with indifference, even on these distant shores; and its consequence threatened us with a serious danger. The ambitious monarch of France had been hurled from his throne, by the combined powers of Europe, and the house of Bourbon restored. This event was received by some of our fellow citizens with open rejoicing, as though it brought some signal good fortune to this country, or to the human race. To this country it could bring no benefit, for it was not likely that the king of France could, any more than Napoleon, feel a friendship for us, although he might not so cordially hate or despise us. Louis the eighteenth could not be expected to entertain much love for republics, and certainly not for ours, the contagion of whose example is said to have contributed much to that dreadful revolution, in which his family had so severely suffered; indeed it is natural that a republic, like ours, should not be regarded with much complacency by any monarch; for, to use the expression of Demosthenes, "we are considered as a spy upon their actions." Napoleon, having been already reduced within a reasonable compass, there was no longer any danger of his seizing the ships of England, and transporting several hundred thousand men to make a barren conquest of America: it is more probable that he would have paid a visit to the emperor of China. I am not the advocate of a cold and unfeeling policy. The unfortunate family of the French Bourbons, have suffered enough to atone for many errors and faults; and as men, we might be permitted to express our satisfaction that providence had deigned to put a term to their miseries. It had, however, become a matter of indifference to us, whether the throne of France was occupied by an emperor or a king. But, as Great Britain had

claimed the chief merit of this wonderful operation, public rejoicings for the event had too much the appearance of a rejoicing for the success of our enemies, and for the abstract success of royalty, which whether of recent or ancient usurpation, ought to be equally nauseous to a republican. The event was, in reality, greatly adverse to our national interests. Fired by the success of the wars of the continent, and extravagantly elated with her supposed power and greatness, the enemy was at liberty to send her veteran troops, and her numerous fleets, to chastise America; while our commissioners were suffered to remain for months in neglect, under a pretence, that despised republicans might wait patiently in the anti-chamber, while Britain was engaged with personages of importance. This turn of affairs, far from producing exultation, ought rather to have depressed the friends of liberty and America. Great Britain was highly incensed that we had not waited, how long no one could tell, with all due patience, under the numerous outrages she had perpetrated for years, until, disengaged from all her European wars, she would have leisure to give us a severe chastisement for daring to assert our rights. It now behoved us to think no more of invading Canada; our northern frontier was to be laid waste, our sea-coast devastated, and the utmost to be expected, was a successful self-defence. In the plentitude of her arrogance, Britain talked of recolonization, and of crippling us for fifty years to come. Such was the situation of America at this eventful period; the time was approaching, which would put to the test the strength of our confederation, and our ability for defence; and what was still more interesting, the time had come, which would try our attachments to our political institutions, which, although not yet venerable from time deserved the highest admiration for their justice and wisdom. The people of other nations could not view, with indifference, the fate of this asylum and sanctuary of the oppressed and unfortunate throughout the world.

The northern sea-coast, which had thus far experienced little molestation from the enemy, became the object of attack early in the spring. On the seventh of April, a body of sailors and marines, to the number of two hundred,

ascended the Connecticut river, as far as Saybrook, where they spiked the cannon and destroyed the shipping; they proceeded thence to Brockway's ferry, where they did the same; and afterwards, unapprehensive of attack, carelessly remained twenty-four hours. In the meantime a body of militia, together with a number of marines and sailors, under captain Jones and lieutenant Biddle, had collected for the purpose of cutting off their retreat; but the British, taking advantage of a very dark night, and using muffled oars, escaped to their fleet, after having destroyed two hundred thousand dollars worth of shipping.

About this time the coasting trade was almost destroyed by a British privateer, the Liverpool packet, which cruised in the sound. Commodore Lewis sailed with a detachment of thirteen gunboats, and succeeded in chasing her off. On his arrival at Saybrook, he found upwards of fifty vessels bound to the eastward, but afraid to venture out. The commodore consented to take them under convoy, but was not able to promise them a protection against the squadron then blockading New-London. They, however, being disposed to run the risk, he sailed with them on the twenty-fifth, and in the afternoon of the same day, was compelled to throw himself between his convoy and a British frigate, a sloop of war and a tender, and kept up a contest until the coasters had safely reached New-London. Having attained his object, he determined to try what he could do with his gunboats against the enemy's ships. Furnaces being hastily constructed, he began to throw hot balls at the enemy's sides, and repeatedly set their ships on fire, without receiving any injury himself. The sloop soon withdrew, and the fire was principally directed against the frigate. One shot passed through her, very near the magazine; her lieutenant, and a great number of her men, were already killed; her captain was on the point of striking, when he observed that the gunboats had ceased firing. The night soon after coming on the gunboats desisted from the attack, determined to wait until morning. At daylight, they perceived the squadron towing away; it was resolved to pursue them, but several other frigates soon after made their appearance, and put a stop to this design. This affair, together with that of Craney island, revived the discussion on the

utility of gunboats in the defence of harbours and the coast. Great service had been rendered by captain Lewis on this as well as many other occasions.

Formidable squadrons were kept up before the ports of New-York, New-London, and Boston; and the whole eastern coast was exposed to the enemy. The war was carried on here in a very different manner from that to the south. Commodore Hardy would not permit any wanton outrages upon private property, or upon defenceless individuals. In spite, however, of his general demeanour, there were particular instances of the contrary on the part of the officers commanding smaller parties, and actuated by a thirst for plunder. At the towns of Wareham and Scituate, they burned all the vessels at their moorings; and at the former, they set fire to an extensive cotton manufactory. At a place called Boothbay, they met with a spirited resistance, and were repeatedly repulsed in various desperate attacks.

An invasion of a more serious nature was made in July. On the eleventh of that month, sir Thomas Hardy, with a strong force, made a descent on Moose island, and after taking possession of Eastport, declared all the islands and towns, on the eastern side of Passamaquoddy bay, to appertain to his Britannick majesty, and required the inhabitants to appear within seven days and take the oath of allegiance. About two-thirds of the inhabitants submitted; but in the month of August, the council of the province of New-Brunswick declared, that notwithstanding the oath of allegiance, they should be considered as a conquered people, and placed under military government. Eastport was soon after strongly fortified; but it was found extremely difficult for the enemy to subsist his troops, and the desertions were so frequent as to render it almost impossible to keep up a garrison.

The commodore soon after sailed with a part of his squadron, for the purpose of attacking Stonington. The appearance of this force excited much alarm, which was not diminished when they received a message from the commodore, to remove the women and children, as he had received orders to reduce the place to ashes. The inhabitants, although with very trifling means of defence,

determined to make an attempt to save their property. The handful of militia of the place, repaired to a small battery erected on the shore, and to a breastwork thrown up for musketry, and at the same time despatched an express to obtain assistance from general Cushing, commanding at New-London. In the evening, five barges and a large launch, filled with men, approached the shore, under cover of a heavy fire from the ships. The Americans, reserving their fire until the enemy were within short grape distance, opened their two eighteen-pounders, and soon compelled the invaders to retire out of the reach of their battery. They next proceeded to another part of the town, which they supposed defenceless, but a part of the militia being detached thither with a six-pounder, the barges were again repulsed; the enemy then retired to their ships, but determined to renew the attack in the morning; and in the meantime, kept up a bombardment until midnight. The next morning it was discovered, that one of the enemy's vessels had approached within pistol shot of the battery, and the barges advanced in still greater numbers than the day before; these were again gallantly repulsed, and the vessel driven from her anchorage. The squadron then renewed the bombardment of the town, but without effect; and on the twelfth the commodore thought proper to retire. The inhabitants, after this gallant defence, which, considering the means with which it was effected, and the great disparity of force opposed to them, deserves much praise, once more occupied their dwellings in security.

It was not long after this, that the British occupied all that part of the district of Maine between Penobscot river and Passamaquoddy bay, and declared it to be held as a colony. On the first of September, the governour of Nova Scotia, and admiral Griffith, entered the Penobscot river, and took possession of Castine, which the garrison had previously evacuated. A proclamation was then issued, declaring that possession of that part of the province of Maine, east of the Penobscot, was formally taken in the name of his Britannick majesty; the country, which contained about thirty thousand inhabitants, was then gradually occupied, and possessed until the conclusion of the war.

CHAPTER XV.

Naval incidents—the Plantagenet seventy-four declines a contest with commodore Rodgers—Captain Stewart chases a British frigate of equal force—Cruise of commodore Porter—Typee war—The Essex captured by the Phœbe and Cherub—The Peacock captures the Epervier—The Wasp captures the Reindeer—The Wasp sinks the Avon—Loss of the Wasp—Frigate President captured by a squadron—Constitution engages and captures two British sloops, the Cayenne and Levant—The Hornet captures the Penguin.

THE naval incidents of eighteen hundred and fourteen, are as grateful to American feelings as those of the two former years. An occurrence took place in the very beginning of the year, which afforded to us as much cause for triumph, as of mortification to the enemy. In the month of February, commodore Rodgers, on his return from a cruise in the President, found himself off Sandy Hook, within a short distance of three large British ships of war, the nearest of which was the Plantagenet, a seventy-four. Believing that an engagement with one, or all of them, was unavoidable, he cleared his ship for action, determining not to surrender without selling his ship as dearly as he could. But notwithstanding he fired several guns to windward, as a proof of his willingness to engage, the British vessels did not think proper to approach, and he safely reached New-York. Captain Lloyd, of the Plantagenet, after returning to England, accounted for his conduct, by alleging a mutiny in his ship, and several of his sailors were executed on the charge.

Another affair took place soon after, which furnished a still stronger proof of the now acknowledged superiority of America upon the ocean, an acknowledgement more strongly expressed than by words. In the month of April, captain Stewart was also on his return in the Constitution, after a cruise, when he was chased by two British frigates and a brig, but escaped by superiour seamanship, into Marblehead. Sometime before, after capturing the publick schooner Picton, he fell in with the British frigate La Pique, captain Maitland, who fled on the

approach of the *Constitution*, and finally escaped during the night, after a long chase. Captain Maitland was complimented by the board of admiralty, for thus obeying their instructions, in not fighting an American frigate singly: it having been determined that not less than two frigates could be a match for an American. The enemy had become equally shy of the gunboat flotilla. Commodore Lewis repeatedly beat off the British vessels near Sandy Hook, and facilitated the return of the American ships. The *Regent*, loaded with a very valuable cargo, was chased by the *Belvidera*, when commodore Lewis throwing himself with eleven of his gunboats between them, the frigate moved off without returning the shot of the gunboats.

That brave and adventurous seaman, commodore Porter, terminated this year his glorious cruise in the Pacific. From Lima, in the neighbourhood of which he had chastised the pirates of the ship *Nereyda*, he proceeded to the Gallipagos, where he cruised from April, 1813, until October; and in the course of that time captured twelve armed British whale ships, carrying in all one hundred and seven guns, and three hundred and two men. Several of these were equipped as American cruisers and store ships; and the *Atlantic*, now called the *Essex Junior*, of twenty guns and sixty men, was assigned to lieutenant Downes. The prizes, which were to be laid up, were convoyed by this officer to Valparaiso. On his return, he brought intelligence to commodore Porter, that a British squadron consisting of one frigate and two sloops of war, and a store ship of twenty guns, had sailed in quest of the *Essex*. The commodore, having been almost a year at sea, with little intermission, found it absolutely necessary that his ship should undergo considerable repairs. With this view, he steered to the island of Nooaheevah, or Madison's island, which he so named in honour of the president. Here he found a fine bay, and a situation in every respect suitable to his wishes, the inhabitants apparently friendly. But it was not long before he found that his situation would be unsafe, in consequence of a war which prevailed between the inhabitants of the neighbouring village, and those

among whom he had been received. These insisted upon his joining them in their wars, and threatened to drive him away if he did not. The commodore was compelled, by a regard to his own safety, to send a party of sailors with the natives, who, by their assistance, defeated their enemies; and by the interference of the commodore, a peace was brought about between them. In consequence of this, the natives erected a village for the commodore, freely traded with him for provisions, and for some time the greatest harmony prevailed.

His safety was again threatened by the conduct of the Typees, an inland tribe, one of the most warlike on the island, and which still continued hostile, and who were continually urging the friendly Indians to destroy the strangers. The commodore found his situation growing every day more critical. He therefore resolved to pursue the course necessary to ensure his safety, and which has always been held justifiable in our intercourse with uncivilized men, who are only to be restrained from violence and injustice by terror. He had succeeded thus far by peaceable means, and by the permission of the natives, in placing his vessel in a state to be repaired; but should the tribes around him become inimical, (and what confidence can any one repose in the faith of a savage, who regards only force,) he might be in greater danger in his present situation. He was very unwilling to engage in a war with them; to prevent the necessity, he sent them a present, and requested that they would remain quiet and be at peace. This had no other effect than to increase their insolence to the Americans, whom they represented as a cowardly race, or they would not have condescended to beg for peace. This enmity was naturally enough engendered by their jealousy of the tribes who had the benefit of the traffick with the whites, and by this means obtained articles from them, according to their estimation, of great value. The commodore now discovered, that his safety depended entirely upon making these people feel his strength, as it was impossible for him, in his present situation, to leave the island until his vessel could be repaired, and while the greater part of his effects were actually on shore. He therefore set

off, at the head of thirty-five men, against these people, determined to give them battle, and, by shewing the efficacy of his weapons, compel them to be at peace. The tribes, heretofore friendly, were on the point of breaking out into hostilities, and were only induced to wait the result of this expedition, of which they were little more than silent spectators. The commodore had in vain endeavoured to convince them of the destructive nature of his fire-arms, by shooting at rocks and trees; war was absolutely unavoidable. But the small force with which he marched, was insufficient to make any impression. Their country being exceedingly mountainous and abounding in thickets, rendered it easy for them to escape. The commodore was, therefore, compelled to return in a worse situation than before. To prevent the friendly Indians from rising, he found it necessary to inform them, that he would proceed the next day with the greater part of his men. A large body was now marched across the mountains, notwithstanding the extreme difficulties of the route, and penetrated into their valley; but the natives, as usual, took refuge in their inaccessible fastnesses. The only mode of causing them to feel the consequences of their conduct, was in the destruction of their villages; nine of them were accordingly burnt, after which the party retreated. The Typees now gladly accepted terms of peace, and all the tribes on the island, soon after, were reconciled to each other; a circumstance which the oldest amongst them did not recollect to have seen; and they vied with each other in friendship towards the whites while the commodore remained.

The destruction of the Typee villages has given rise, on the part of the British writers, to the most scandalous abuse of commodore Porter and the American people, by which means they have endeavoured to bring the acts of the Americans to a level with their own. The destruction of a few wigwams covered with palmtrees, erected to shield the inhabitants from the heats or the rains of the torrid zone, effected by an American officer in self-defence, and for the sake of peace, is to be viewed with horror; while the conduct of the British government in India, in America, and throughout the world, without any

other motive than base rapacity, is to be passed over unnoticed. The destruction of the Typee villages, is the conduct of a bucanier, in commodore Porter; but the wanton destruction of a flourishing town, inhabited by civilized people, on the coast of Chili, by admiral Anson, is an exploit to be boasted of. Can it be that the wanton destruction of our villages on the sea-coast, by the British admirals, was in retaliation for the destruction of the Typee villages? Accusations of this nature ill befit an Englishman: they too readily call to mind the innumerable acts of wicked, depraved, rapacious violence, which Great Britain, in common with other European powers, has, without scruple, committed upon the inhabitants of both the Indies. Even if there be grounds for the accusation, it is not for Britain to be the accuser. Humanity must undoubtedly regret that the villages of the Typees were destroyed; but reason must acknowledge the justice of the destruction, from the impossibility of purchasing peace and security from the savage by any other means.

There is one part of commodore Porter's conduct which is not approved; the taking possession of the island in the name of the American government: this, it is true, gave satisfaction to the natives, who regarded it as a mere expression of friendship, or rather an adoption amongst the Mellickees, and extending no further; but this was following the example of the European states, who have usually considered themselves entitled, by the right of discovery, to territories inhabited only by uncivilized men. We, however, have followed a different principle, and had the Typee war ensued in consequence of this act, it could find no justification; of this there is no doubt; the enmity of the Indians proceeded from their jealousy of the tribes nearer the sea-coast; who had freely permitted the commodore to refit his vessel. In no instance has any European power acknowledged the right of civilized men to the lands occupied by them; they have uniformly possessed themselves by violence of such portions as they wanted, whereas the United States have uniformly obtained them by purchase.

The Essex being completely repaired, and provided with provisions for four months, sailed for Valparaiso on the twelfth of December, in company with the Essex Junior. The three prizes were secured under the fort, left in the charge of lieutenant Gamble, of the marines, with orders to proceed to Valparaiso, after a certain time.

It was not long after the arrival of commodore Porter at Valparaiso, when commodore Hillyar appeared there in the Phœbe frigate, accompanied by the Cherub sloop of war. These vessels had been equipped for the purpose of meeting the Essex, with picked crews, in prime order, and hoisted flags bearing the motto, "God and our country, British sailors' best rights; *traitors offend them.*" This was in allusion to Porter's celebrated motto, "Free trade and sailors' rights;" he now hoisted at his mizzen, "God, our country, and liberty: tyrants offend them." On entering the harbour, the British commodore fell foul of the Essex, in such a situation as to be placed completely in the power of the latter; the forbearance of commodore Porter was acknowledged by the English commander, and he passed his word and honour to observe the same regard to the neutrality of the port.

The British vessels soon after stood out, and cruised off the port about six weeks, rigorously blockading the Essex. Their united force amounted to eighty-one guns and about five hundred men, about double that of the Essex; but the circumstance of this force being divided in two ships, rendered the disparity still greater; and was by no means counterbalanced by the Essex Junior. Commodore Porter being prevented by this great disparity of force, from engaging, made repeated attempts to draw the Phœbe into action singly, either by manœuvring or sending formal challenges; but commodore Hillyar carefully avoided the coming to action alone. The American commander, hearing that an additional British force was on its way, and having discovered that his vessel could outsail those of the British, determined to sail out, and, while the enemy was in chase, enable the Essex Junior to escape to a place of rendezvous previously appointed.

On the twenty-eighth of March, the wind coming on to blow fresh from the southward; the Essex parted her

starboard cable, and dragged her larboard anchor to sea. Not a moment was lost in getting sail on the ship, as it was determined to seize this moment to escape. In endeavouring to pass to the windward of the enemy, a squall struck the American vessel, just as she was doubling the point, which carried away her maintopmast; both ships immediately gave chase, and being unable to escape in his crippled state, the commodore endeavoured to put back into the harbour; but finding this impracticable, he ran into a small bay, and anchored within pistol shot of the shore: where, from a supposition that the enemy would continue to respect the neutrality of the port, he thought himself secure. He soon found, however, by the manner in which they approached, that he was mistaken. With all possible despatch, therefore, he prepared his ship for action, and endeavoured to get a spring on his cable, which he could not accomplish before the enemy commenced the attack, at fifty-four minutes past three. At first the *Phœbe* placed herself on his stern, and the *Cherub* on his larboard bow; but the latter soon finding herself exposed to a hot fire, changed her position, and with her consort, kept up a raking fire under his stern. The American being unable to bring his broadside to bear on the enemy, his spring cables having been three times shot away, was obliged, therefore, to rely for defence against this tremendous attack, on three long twelve pounders; which he ran out of the stern ports; but which were worked with such bravery and skill, as in half an hour, to do so much injury to the enemy, as to compel them to haul off and repair. It was evident that commodore Hillyar meant to risk nothing from the daring courage of the Americans; all his manœuvres were deliberate and wary; his antagonist was in his power, and his only concern was to succeed with as little loss to himself as possible. The situation of the *Essex* was most vexatious to our brave countrymen; many of them were already killed and wounded, and from the crippled state of their ship, they were unable to bring her guns to bear upon the enemy.—Her gallant crew were not disheartened, aroused to desperation, they expressed their defiance to the enemy, and their determination to hold out to the last.

The enemy having repaired, now placed himself, with both ships, on the starboard quarter of the *Essex*, where none of her guns could be brought to bear; the commodore saw no hope but in getting under way; the flying-jib was the only sail he could set; this he caused to be hoisted, cut his cable, and ran down on both ships, with the intention of laying the *Phœbe* on board. For a short time, he was enabled to close with the enemy, and the firing was tremendous; the decks of the *Essex* were strewed with dead, and her cockpit filled with the wounded; she had been several times on fire, and was, in fact, a perfect wreck. At this moment, a feeble hope arose, that she might still be saved, in consequence of the *Cherub* being compelled to haul off on account of her crippled state: she, however, kept up her fire at a distance, with her long guns. The *Essex* was unable, however, to take advantage of the circumstance, as the *Phœbe* edged off, and also kept up, at a distance, a destructive fire; the former being totally bereft of her sails, could not bring her to close quarters. Commodore Porter, finding the greater part of his crew disabled, at last gave up all hope, and attempted to run his vessel on shore, the wind at that moment favouring his design; but it suddenly changed, drove her close upon the *Phœbe*; exposing her to a raking fire. The ship was totally unmanageable, but as she drifted with her head to the enemy, commodore Porter again seized a faint hope of being able to board. At this moment, lieutenant Downes came on board, to receive orders, expecting that his commander would soon be a prisoner. His services could be of no avail in the present deplorable state of the *Essex*, and finding from the enemy's putting up his helm, that the last attempt at boarding would not succeed, Downes was directed to repair to his ship, to be prepared for defending and destroying her, in case of attack.

The slaughter on board the *Essex* now became horrible, the enemy continuing to rake her, while she was unable to bring a single gun to bear. Still her commander refused to yield while a ray of hope appeared. Every expedient, that a fertile and inventive genius could suggest, was resorted to, in the forlorn hope, that he might be able, by some lucky chance, to escape from the grasp

of the foe. A hawser was bent to the sheet anchor, and the anchor cut from the bows to bring the ship's head around. This succeeded; the broadside of the *Essex* was again brought to bear; and as the enemy was much crippled, and unable to hold his own, the commodore thought she might drift out of gunshot, before he discovered that the *Essex* had anchored; but alas! this last expedient failed; the hawser parted, and with it went the last lingering hope of the *Essex*. At this moment her situation was awful beyond description. She was on fire both before and aft, the flames were bursting up her hatchway, a quantity of powder exploded below, and word was given that the fire was near her magazine. Thus surrounded by horrors, without any chance of saving his ship, he turned his attention to the saving as many of his gallant companions as he could; the distance to the shore not exceeding three quarters of a mile, he hoped that many of them would save themselves before the ship blew up. His boats being cut up, they could only hope to escape by swimming; by some this was effected, but the greater part of his generous crew resolved to stay by the ship, and share the fate of their commander.

They now laboured to extinguish the flames, and succeeded; after this, they again repaired to their guns, but their strength had become so much exhausted, that this effort was in vain. Commodore Porter summoned a consultation of the officers of the divisions, when to his astonishment only one acting lieutenant, Stephen Decatur M'Night, appeared. The accounts from every part of the ship were deplorable indeed; she was in imminent danger of sinking, and so crowded with the wounded, that even her birthdeck could hold no more, and several were killed under the surgeon's hands. In the meantime the enemy, at a secure distance, continued his fire; the water having become smooth, he struck the hull of the *Essex* at every shot. At last despairing of saving his ship, the commodore was compelled, at twenty minutes past six, to give the painful orders to strike the colours. The enemy, probably not seeing that this had taken place, continued to fire for ten minutes after, and Porter was about

to give orders that the colours should again be hoisted, under a belief that the enemy intended to give no quarters, when the firing ceased. The loss on board the *Essex* was fifty-eight killed, thirty-nine wounded severely, twenty-seven slightly, and thirty-one missing. The loss on board the British vessels was five killed and ten wounded; but they were both much cut up in their hulls and rigging; the *Phœbe* could scarcely be kept afloat until she anchored in the port of Valparaiso next morning.

Commodore Porter was paroled, and permitted to return to the United States in the *Essex Junior*, which was converted into a cartel for the purpose. On arriving off the port of New-York, the vessel was detained by the *Saturn* razee, and to the disgrace of the British navy, already dishonoured by the base attack upon this gallant officer, he was compelled to give up his parole, and declare himself a prisoner of war, and as such he informed the British officer that he would attempt his escape. In consequence of this threat, the *Essex Junior* was ordered to remain under the lee of the *Saturn*; but the next morning commodore Porter put off in his boat, though thirty miles from shore, and notwithstanding the pursuit by those of the *Saturn*, arrived safely in New-York. Here he was received with open arms by his countrymen; the most unbounded demonstrations of joy prevailed wherever he appeared, and certainly his services to his country justly claimed its gratitude and esteem.

Perhaps a more dreadful example of determined, unconquerable courage was never exhibited, than in the defence of the *Essex*: to an American, no victory can afford more pleasing and proud recollection; to our enemy, it cannot be remembered without shame, as gained by unmanliness in the first place, and in the next by violating neutral rights. May no victory crown my country thus unfairly won. It is pleasing to see the spontaneous expression of human feeling in favour of the weak, when contending against superiour and lawless force. Thousands of the inhabitants of Valparaiso covered the neighbouring heights, as spectators of the conflict. Touched with the forlorn situation of the *Essex*, and filled with admiration at the unflagging spirit and persevering bravery

of her commander and crew, a generous anxiety animated the multitude for their fate; bursts of delight arose when, by any vicissitude of battle or prompt expedient, a change seemed to turn up in their favour; and the eager spectators were seen to wring their hands, and to utter groans of sympathy when the transient hope was defeated, and the gallant little frigate once more become the object of unresisting slaughter.

During the third year, every naval combat, without a single exception, where there was any thing like an equality of force, terminated in favour of the Americans. The sloop of war *Peacock*, launched in October, performed a cruise during the winter, and on her return was chased into *St. Mary's*. She soon after put to sea again, and on the twenty-ninth of April discovered the brig of war *Epervier*, captain *Wales*, having several vessels under convoy. Captain *Warrington* engaged the *Epervier*, while the others were making their escape. At the first broadside, the foreyard of the *Peacock* was totally disabled by two round shot in the starboard quarter. By this she was deprived of the use of her fore and fore-topsail, and was obliged to keep aloof during the remainder of the action, which lasted forty-two minutes. In this time she received considerable damage in her rigging, but her hull was not at all injured. The *Epervier* struck, having five feet water in her hold, her topmast over her side, her main boom shot away, her foremast cut nearly in two, her fore rigging and stays shot away, her hull pierced by forty-five shot, twenty of which were within a foot of her water line. Eleven of her crew were killed, and her first lieutenant and fourteen men wounded. She was immediately taken possession of by lieutenant *Nicholson*, first officer of the *Peacock*, who with lieutenant *Vorhees*, of the same ship, had been already distinguished in another naval action. The sum of one hundred and eighteen thousand dollars in specie was found in her, and transferred to the *Peacock*. Captain *Warrington* immediately repaired, with his prize, to one of the southern ports. The day following the captain discovered two frigates in chase. At the suggestion of lieutenant *Nicholson*, he took all the prisoners on board the *Peacock*, and leaving a sufficient number on board the

Epervier for the purpose of navigating her, he directed her to seek the nearest port. By skilful seamanship the captain succeeded in escaping from the enemy's ships, and reached Savannah, where he found his prize. Lieutenant Nicholson, by his good management, had brought her in, after encountering very great difficulties.

The new sloop of war *Wasp*, captain Blakely, sailed from Portsmouth on the first of May, and after capturing seven merchantmen, fell in with the British brig of war the *Reindeer*, captain Manners, which she captured after an action of eighteen minutes. On the sixth of July, being in chase of two vessels, he discovered the *Reindeer*, and immediately altered his course, and hauled by the wind in chase of her. At fifteen minutes past one, captain Blakely prepared for action; but it was not before fifteen minutes after three, in consequence of their manœuvring, and the endeavours of the *Reindeer* to escape, that they approached sufficiently near to engage. Several guns were fired from the *Wasp* before her antagonist could bring her guns to bear; her helm was then put alee, and at twenty-six minutes after three, captain Blakely commenced the action with his after carronades on the starboard side, and fired in succession. Shortly after, the larboard bow coming in contact with the *Wasp*, captain Manners gave orders to board, but the attempt was gallantly repulsed by the crew of the *Wasp*, and the enemy was several times repelled: at forty-four minutes past three, orders were given to board in turn. Throwing themselves with promptitude upon her deck, they succeeded in the execution of their orders; and at forty minutes past three the flag of the enemy's ship came down. She was almost cut to pieces, and half her crew were killed and wounded. The loss of the *Wasp* was five killed and twenty-one wounded; among the latter, midshipmen Langdon and Toscan, both of whom expired some days after. The *Reindeer* having been found altogether unmanageable, was blown up, and captain Blakely steered for L'Orient, to provide for the wounded of both crews.

After leaving L'Orient, and capturing two valuable British merchantmen, captain Blakely fell in with a fleet of ten sail, under convoy of the Armada seventy-four and a

bomb ship. He stood for them, and succeeded in cutting out of the squadron a brig laden with brass and iron cannon and military stores, from Gibraltar; after taking out the prisoners and setting her on fire, he endeavoured to cut out another, but was chased off by the seventy-four. In the evening, at half past six, he descried two vessels, one on his starboard and one on his larboard bow, and hauled for that which was farthest to windward. At seven she was discovered to be a brig of war, and at twenty-nine minutes past nine, she was under the lee bow of the *Wasp*. An action soon after commenced, which lasted until ten o'clock, when captain Blakely, supposing his antagonist to be silenced, ceased firing, and demanded if he had surrendered. No answer being returned, he commenced firing; and the enemy returned broadside for broadside for twelve minutes, when, perceiving that the two last were not returned, he hailed again, and was informed that she was sinking, and that her commander had struck. Before the *Wasp's* boats could be lowered, a second brig of war was discovered: the crew were instantly sent to their quarters, and the *Wasp* was standing to for the approach of the stranger, when two other brigs appeared: he now made sail, and endeavoured to draw the first one after him, but without effect. The name of the prize has since been ascertained to have been the *Avon*, captain Arbuthnot, of the same force as the *Reindeer*. She sunk immediately after the last man had been taken out of her. She had eight killed and thirty-one wounded, including her captain and several other officers.

The *Wasp* soon repaired her damage, and continued on her cruise. On the twenty-first of September, she captured, off the *Madeiras*, her thirteenth prize, the British brig *Atalanta*, eight guns, and the only one she sent into port. The return of this vessel, after her brilliant cruise, was for a long time fondly looked for by our country; but all hope has at last vanished of ever seeing her again. There is but little doubt that the brave commander and his gallant crew have found a common grave in the waste of ocean; but they will always live in the fond gratitude and recollection of their country.

The blockade of commodore Decatur's squadron at New-London, having been continued until after the season had passed in which there existed any prospect of escape, the ships were ordered up the river and dismantled, while the commodore with his crew were transferred to the President, then at New-York. A cruise was contemplated, in conjunction with the Peacock, the Hornet, and the Tom Bowline store-ship. The commodore thinking it more safe to venture out singly, appointed a place of rendezvous, and ordered the other vessels to follow. In consequence of the negligence of the pilot, the President struck upon the bar, and remained there thumping for two hours, by which her ballast was deranged, and her trim for sailing entirely lost. The course of the wind prevented him from returning into port; he put to sea, trusting to the excellence of the vessel. At daylight he fell in with a British squadron, consisting of the Endymion, Tenedos and Pomone frigates, and the Majestick razee. In spite of every exertion they gained upon him; the foremost, the Endymion, got close under his quarters, and commenced firing. The commodore determined to bear up and engage her, with the intention of carrying her by boarding, and afterwards escaping in her, and abandoning his own ship. In this he was prevented by the manœuvring of the enemy, who protracted the engagement for two hours, until the rest of the squadron were fast gaining upon them. He now assailed the Endymion, and in a short time completely silenced her, leaving her a wreck. The President was also considerably damaged, having lost twenty-five in killed and wounded; among the former, lieutenants Babit and Hamilton; and acting lieutenant Howell; among the latter, the commodore himself, and midshipman Dale, who afterwards died. On the approach of the squadron, the gallant commodore, unwilling to sacrifice the lives of his men in a useless contest, on receiving the fire of the nearest frigate, surrendered. On this occasion, we cannot pass in silence the dishonourable conduct of the British officers of the navy, where such ought least to have been expected. The generous and heroick character of Decatur is acknowledged wherever the American flag is known, and requires no testimony in its sup-

port, for the British themselves have often declared their admiration of this chivalrous officer. The commodore was taken on board the *Endymion*, for the purpose of acting the miserable farce of surrendering his sword to the officer of a frigate of equal size, but which would have fallen into the hands of the commodore, but for the approach of the squadron. Decatur indignantly refused to give up his sword to any one but the commander of the squadron. Another artifice was actually resorted to, in order to satisfy the good people of England that the President was a seventy-four in disguise: she was lightened and laid in dock, along side of an old seventy-four, diminished to appearance by being deeply laden. Thus it seems, a British frigate had captured an American seventy-four. The naval superiority of Great Britain was therefore no longer doubted.

Not the least amongst the exploits of our naval heroes, was the capture of two of the enemy's ships of war by the *Constitution*, captain Stewart. Having sailed on a cruise, he discovered two ships, one of which bore up for the *Constitution*, but soon after changed her course, to join her consort. The *Constitution* gave chase to both, and at six P. M. ranged ahead of the sternmost, brought her on the quarter, her consort on the bow, and opened a broadside, which was immediately returned. An exchange of broadsides continued until both ships were enveloped in smoke; upon the clearing away of which, the *Constitution* finding herself abreast of the headmost ship, captain Stewart ordered both sides to be manned, backed topsails, and dropped into his first position. The ship on the bow backed sails also. The *Constitution's* broadsides were then fired from the larboard battery, and in a few moments the ship on the bow, perceiving her error in getting sternboard, filled away with the intention of tacking athwart the bows of the *Constitution*, while the other fell off entirely unmanageable. The *Constitution* then filled away in pursuit of the former, and coming within a hundred yards, gave her several raking broadsides, and so crippled her that no further apprehensions were entertained of her being able to escape; the captain therefore returned to the first, which imme-

diately struck. Possession was then taken of her by lieutenant Hoffman, and proved to be the frigate *Cyane*, captain Gordon Falcon, of thirty-four guns. Captain Stewart then steered in pursuit of the other vessel, and after a short resistance, in which she suffered considerably, she struck, with five feet water in her hold. She proved to be the sloop of war *Levant*, of eighteen thirty-two pound carronades. The loss on board the two ships amounted to about eighty in killed and wounded; on board the *Constitution* there were four killed and eleven wounded; but the ship received a very trifling injury. On the tenth of March, captain Stewart entered the harbour of port Praya, with his prizes, and on the eleventh a British squadron of two sixty gun ships and a frigate, appeared off the entrance of the harbour; captain Stewart, having no faith in his security, in this neutral port, made sail with his prize the *Cyane*, and though closely pursued, had the good fortune to escape into the United States. The *Levant* was recaptured in the Portuguese port, in contempt of the neutral state. These are acts of injustice, in which no nation can ever prosper.

The *Peacock*, *Hornet*, and *Tom Bowline*, left New-York a few days after the President, without having received information of her capture. On the twenty-third of January, one thousand eight hundred and fifteen, the *Hornet* parted company, and directed her course to *Tristan d'Acuna*, the place of rendezvous. On the twenty-third of March, she descried the British brig *Penguin*, captain Dickenson, of eighteen guns, and a twelve-pound carronade, to the southward and eastward of the island. Captain Biddle hove to, while the *Penguin* bore down; at forty minutes past one, the British vessel commenced the engagement. The firing was hotly kept up for fifteen minutes, the *Penguin* gradually nearing the *Hornet* with the intention to board, her captain having given orders for this purpose, but was killed by a grape shot: her lieutenant then bore her up, and running her bowsprit between the main and mizzen rigging of the *Hornet*, gave orders to board; his men, however, perceiving the crew of the *Hornet* ready to receive them, refused to follow him. At this moment the heavy swell of the sea lifted

the Hornet ahead, and the enemy's bowsprit carried away her mizzen shrouds and spanker boom, and the Penguin hung upon the Hornet's quarter, with the loss of her foremast and bowsprit. Her commander then called out that he had surrendered, and captain Biddle ordered his men to cease firing. At this moment an officer of the Hornet called to captain Biddle, that a man was taking aim at him in the enemy's shrouds; he had scarcely changed his position; when a musket ball struck him in the neck, and wounded him severely. Two marines immediately levelled their pieces at the wretch, and killed him before he brought his gun from his shoulder. The Penguin had by that time got clear of the Hornet, and the latter wore round to give the enemy a fresh broadside, when they cried out a second time that they had surrendered. It was with great difficulty that captain Biddle could restrain his crew, who were exasperated at the conduct of the enemy. In twenty-two minutes after the commencement of the action, she was taken possession of by lieutenant Mayo, of the Hornet. The Penguin was so much injured, that captain Biddle determined on taking out her crew, and scuttling her; and afterwards sent off his prisoners by the Tom Bowline, which by this time had joined him with the Peacock. The enemy lost fourteen in killed and twenty-eight wounded; the Hornet one killed and eleven wounded; among the latter, her lieutenant, Conner, dangerously.

Captain Biddle, being compelled to part from the Peacock, by the appearance of a British ship of the line, after being closely chased for several days, effected his escape into St. Salvador, where the news of peace soon after arrived. The capture of the Cyane, the Levant, and the Penguin, took place before the expiration of the time limited by the second article of the treaty of peace.

The exploits of the privateers continued to rival those of our national vessels. In one instance the enemy was compelled to pay dearly for his disregard of the sanctuary of a neutral port. The privateer Armstrong lay at anchor in the harbour of Fayal, when a British squadron, consisting of the Carnation, the Plantagenet, and the Rota, hove in sight. Captain Reid, of the privateer, dis-

covering by the light of the moon that the enemy had put out his barges, and was preparing to attack him, cleared for action, and moved near the shore. Four boats filled with men approached, and making no answer on being hailed, a fire was opened upon them, which was returned, but they soon called out for quarters, and were permitted to haul off. They then prepared for a more formidable attack; the privateer was now anchored within a cable's length of the shore, and within pistol shot of the castle. The next day they sent a fleet of boats, supported by the *Carnation*, which stood before the harbour, to prevent the escape of the privateer. At midnight the boats approached a second time, to the number of twelve or fourteen, manned with several hundred men. They were suffered to approach along side of the privateer, and without waiting an attack; they were assailed with such astonishing fury, that in forty minutes scarcely a man of them was left alive. During these attacks the shores were lined with the inhabitants, who from the brightness of the moon, had a full view of the scene. The governour, with the first people of the place, stood by and saw the whole affair. After the second attack, the governour sent a note to the commander of the *Plantagenet*, captain Lloyd, requesting him to desist, but was answered that he was determined to have the privateer at the risk of knocking down the town. The American consul having communicated this information to captain Reid, he ordered his crew to save their effects as fast as possible, and to carry the dead and wounded on shore. At day-light the *Carnation* stood close to the *Armstrong*, and commenced a heavy fire; but being considerably cut up by the privateer, she hauled off to repair. Captain Reid now thinking it useless to protract the contest, on her reappearance, scuttled his vessel and escaped to shore. The British loss amounted to the astonishing number of one hundred and twenty killed, and one hundred and thirty wounded; that of the Americans was only two killed and seven wounded. Several houses in the town were destroyed, and some of the inhabitants wounded.

CHAPTER XVI.

Movements of the army on the Niagara frontier—Capture of fort Erie—Battle of Chippewa—Death of general Swift—Battle of Niagara—Siege of fort Erie—Assault upon fort Erie—Sortie upon the British works—Affairs of the west—Expedition against Michilimackinack.

FROM reviewing the events of the war on the ocean, we return to the war on the northern frontier. Not to be without a plan of campaign, although experience had already shown how little of the cabinet plans could be carried into execution, where they depended upon so many contingencies, not susceptible of calculation, the following was adopted. Colonel Croghan, with the assistance of commodore Sinclair, was to proceed against the British on the upper lakes, with a view of recovering the American posts of Michilimackinack and St. Joseph. The American army, under general Brown, was to cross the Niagara and take possession of Burlington heights; and afterwards, in conjunction with commodore Chauncey, proceed to attack the British posts on the Peninsula. General Izard, commanding the northern army, was to push a number of armed boats into the St. Lawrence, so as to command the Rapids, and cut off the communication between Montreal and Kingston. A strong post, garrisoned with fifteen hundred men, would also co-operate in this object. Batteries were also to be thrown up for the purpose of protecting the American fleet on lake Champlain, and to prevent that of the British from entering it. Some of these arrangements had been anticipated; but the greater part was controlled by unforeseen circumstances.

The spring passed away before general Brown was in a condition to attempt any thing against the British posts on the opposite side of the river; even fort Niagara still remained in their hands. He had, however, been assiduously occupied, with his gallant officers, general Scott and general Ripley, in disciplining his troops, and in collecting his force. By the beginning of July, this consisted of two brigades of regulars, and a brigade of New-

York volunteers, under generals Porter and Swift, together with a few Indians. In the meantime the force of the enemy, under general Drummond, had been greatly increased, by the addition of a number of veteran regiments, which since the pacification of Europe, Great Britain had been enabled to send to this country.

The first step to be taken, with a view to any future operations against Canada, and to recover the possession of Niagara, it was thought should be against fort Erie; for being once possessed of this post, it was supposed the enemy would evacuate the American side, and it was expected that this garrison would be carried with more ease than the other, from the circumstance of an attack being less expected. Fort Erie was at that time commanded by captain Buck, with about one hundred and seventy men. The two brigades of regulars embarked on the morning of the third of July; general Scott with the first, and a detachment of artillery under major Hindman, crossed to the Canada shore, below fort Erie; and general Ripley, with the second brigade, above. The garrison was completely taken by surprise, and surrounded before the movements of the assailants were discovered, and was compelled to surrender after firing a few shot.

It was next resolved to proceed immediately and attack major-general Riall, who at that time occupied an intrenched camp at Chippewa; having first made arrangements for the defence of the fort, which was intrusted to lieutenant M'Donough, and for securing the rear of the army.

On the morning of the fourth, general Scott advanced with his brigade, and captain Towson's artillery, and was followed in the course of the day by general Ripley, and the field artillery under major Hindman, together with general Porter's volunteers. The army was then drawn up in a regular order to receive the enemy, on the right of Street's creek, within two miles of the camp. The first brigade had encountered the advance corps, which retreated, but not until after destroying the bridge. Captain Crooker had crossed the stream some distance above, and, not conscious of his situation, was in pursuit of the British, who now turned upon and surrounded him; but

he defended himself in so gallant a manner, that he was enabled to keep off the enemy, until captains Hull and Harrison, and lieutenant Randolph, came to his relief.

The army remained in this position until the next day, when early in the morning, the British commenced an attack upon the picket guards. A company, commanded by captain Treat, was suddenly fired upon by a party concealed in the high grass; one man fell, and the vanguard broke and retreated. The exertions of the captain to rally his men was mistaken for an act of cowardice, and he was stripped of his command. Being resolved to do away the imputation, he requested to engage in the approaching battle as a private, and was accordingly directed to lead a platoon. He was afterwards tried and honourably acquitted. The necessity of strict discipline, at such a moment, cannot be disputed. These assaults continued throughout the greater part of the day. General Riall, perceiving that an engagement was unavoidable, resolved to strike the first blow; he therefore issued from his encampment, with his whole force, and soon appeared on the left bank of Street's creek; sending his light troops to the left of the American camp, for the purpose of turning their flank; this was frustrated by the volunteers, who after a sharp conflict compelled them to retire; but in pursuing on the Chippewa road, they came suddenly in contact with the main body of the British. The volunteers were now severely pressed by troops greatly superiour in numbers and discipline. General Brown perceiving this, ordered Scott's brigade and Towson's artillery to advance, and draw the enemy into action on the plains of Chippewa. This was effected immediately on crossing the bridge.

Major Jessup, a gallant young officer, who commanded the third battalion, was ordered to turn the right flank of the British, which rested on a wood to the left; whilst warmly engaged in this service, he was compelled to detach captain Ketchum, to keep a superiour detachment in check; the major, having cleared his front, moved to the relief of his captain, who had maintained an unequal contest against superior numbers. His object was not accomplished here until after a severe struggle; being at

length closely pressed in front and in flank, he deliberately gave orders to his men to support arms and advance, under a dreadful fire, until he gained a position of more security, whence he compelled the enemy to retire. The admirable coolness and intrepidity in his corps, was worthy of veterans, and proved the great progress the Americans had made in discipline. The British right flank soon after began to fall back, while the Americans pressed them closely. The battalion on the American right, under major Leavenworth, was not only engaged with the British infantry but often exposed to the fire of their batteries. One of his officers, captain Harrison, had his leg shot off by a cannon ball; but he considered the contest so doubtful, that he would not suffer himself to be taken from the spot, and continued to perform his duty with astonishing fortitude until the action ceased. After the lapse of an hour from the time the action became general, captain Towson having completely silenced the enemy's most powerful battery, now turned upon the infantry, then much exposed to an oblique discharge of major M'Neill's musketry; the enemy was at this moment advancing to charge, but the concentrated fire which poured upon them, and the apparent issue on their right flank with major Jessup, compelled general Riall to retire, until he reached the sloping ground which led to Chippewa, when the British fled in confusion to their entrenchments.—Major Hindman and captain Towson pursued the enemy under the fire of his batteries, but which, on examination, were found too strong to be assailed.

This may be considered the first regular pitched battle, and furnished a convincing proof, that nothing but discipline was wanting to give to our soldiers on land, the same excellence which our seamen had discovered on the ocean. The battle was fought with great judgment and coolness on both sides, and its result, considering the numbers engaged, was exceedingly sanguinary. The loss of the Americans in killed, wounded and missing, amounted to three hundred and thirty-eight. Among the wounded were colonel Campbell, captains King, of the twenty-third, Read, of the twenty-fifth, Harrison, of the

forty-second; lieutenants Palmer and Brimhall, of the ninth, Barron, of the eleventh, and De Wit and Patchim, of the twenty-fifth. The total loss of the British, according to the report of general Drummond, was five hundred and five, of whom forty-six were missing, the remainder either killed or wounded. Their loss in officers was seven captains and seventeen subalterns; the marquis of Tweedale, colonels Gordon and Dickson, and captain Holland, aid of general Riall. Few occurrences since the war afforded a more lively gratification to the people. The most honourable testimonials were bestowed upon the principal officers concerned; and the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel was conferred upon majors Jessup, Leavenworth, and M'Neill: and of major on captains Towson, Crooker and Harrison. Several other officers were named as having distinguished themselves: major Wood of the engineers, captain Harris, and lieutenant M'Donald, acquitted themselves with much honour.

The defeat of Riall having been communicated to general Drummond, he sent a regiment to reinforce him, and enable him to repel any attack upon his works. General Brown still remained at his encampment, determined to dislodge the British; as the most effectual mode, he detached general Ripley to open a road to the Chipewewa river, at a point three miles above the enemy's camp, and to construct a bridge for the purpose of attacking the enemy on his right flank and front. This was executed with so much secrecy, that the bridge was nearly completed before it was discovered, when general Riall ordered his artillery to advance and prevent the Americans from completing their works; but the artillery of general Ripley compelled the British to retire. General Riall soon after abandoned his works, which were occupied by general Brown that evening. The enemy fell back to Queenstown, and afterwards to Ten Mile creek.

The army encamped at Queenstown, and previous to any further movement, general Swift, at his own request, was detached with about one hundred and twenty men, to reconnoitre the enemy's works. He surprised an out-

post, and took prisoners a corporal and his guard; one of these, after having asked and received quarters, suddenly raised his piece, and gave the general a mortal wound. The general instantly killed the assassin, and on the approach of a party, brought by the firing of the soldier, he continued to fight at the head of his detachment, regardless of his wound, until the enemy was repulsed. This gallant officer died soon after he was brought to camp, sincerely regretted, and was interred with all the honours the army could bestow. He had been a distinguished soldier of the revolution.

The question as to what step was next to be taken, was submitted by general Brown to a council of war; whether to follow up the enemy rapidly, and annihilate his force, or first to attack Niagara and fort George. The latter was resolved upon. Preparatory to this, general Ripley and general Porter were ordered to reconnoitre the fort; the one along the Niagara, the other by the way of St. David's, for the purpose of ascertaining their respective situations, and obtaining the information necessary for the attack. This service was successively performed, although much exposed to the fire of the garrison, and assailed by skirmishing parties. The plan, however, was abandoned, in consequence, as was alleged by general Brown, of not being able to obtain the co-operation of Chauncey's fleet, the commodore being at this time extremely ill; the general, therefore, prepared to pursue the British army to Burlington heights; and, with a view to this, on the twenty-fourth he fell down to the junction of the Chippewa with the Niagara.

Lieutenant-general Drummond, mortified that his veteran troops should have been beaten, by what he considered raw Americans, was anxious for an opportunity of retrieving his credit. He had collected every regiment from Burlington and York, and the lake being free, the British commodore was able to transport troops from Kingston, fort George, and even Prescott. General Riall took post at Queenstown, immediately after it was abandoned by the Americans, who had fallen back to Chippewa; general Dummond crossed a strong detachment to threaten the town of Schlosser, which contained the sup-

plies of general Brown, together with his sick and wounded; this was done with the expectation of inducing general Brown to divide his force; an advanced party was at the same time pushed forward on the Niagara road. With a view of drawing off the the enemy from his attempt on the village across the river, general Scott was ordered to move towards Queenstown, with his brigade, seven hundred strong, with Towson's artillery, the dragoons and the mounted men; with orders to report if the enemy appeared, and call for assistance. At four o'clock the brigade moved from the camp, and after proceeding about two miles and an half from the Chippewa, and within a short distance of the cataracts of Niagara, the enemy was discovered to occupy an eminence near Lundy's-lane, a position of great strength, selected by general Riall, where he had planted a most formidable battery of nine pieces of artillery, two of which were brass twenty-four pounders. On reaching a narrow strip of woods, which intervened between them and the British line, captains Harris and Pentland, whose companies formed a part of the advance, were first fired on, and engaged the enemy, who retreated for the purpose of drawing the American column to the situation at Lundy's-lane. General Scott resolutely pressed forward, first despatching major Jones with the intelligence to the commander-in-chief. He had no sooner cleared the wood, and formed in line on a plain finely adapted to military manoeuvres, than a tremendous cannonade commenced from the enemy's batteries, which was returned by captain Towson, but without being able to bring his pieces to bear on the eminence. The action was continued for an hour, against a force three times that of the American brigade, on the ground to the left of Queenstown road. The eleventh and twenty-second having expended their ammunition, colonel Brady and lieutenant-colonel McNeill being both severely wounded, and nearly all the other officers either killed or wounded, both regiments were withdrawn from action. Lieutenant Crawford, lieutenant-adjutant Sawyer, and a few others, attached themselves to the ninth, in such stations as were assigned them. This regiment, under its gallant leader, lieutenant

ant-colonel Leavenworth, was now obliged to maintain the whole brunt of the action, when orders were given to advance and charge on the heights, and, with the other regiments, break the enemy's line. But general Scott, on receiving information of the shattered condition of the eleventh and twenty-second, countermanded his order. Colonel Jessup, at the commencement of the action, had been detached with the twenty-fifth, to attack the left of the enemy's line.

The British now pressed forward on the ninth, which with wonderful firmness withstood the attack of their overwhelming numbers; but reduced at length to nearly one half, and being compelled at every moment to repel fresh charges of the British, colonel Leavenworth despatched a messenger to general Scott, to communicate its condition. The general rode up in person, roused the flagging spirits of his brave men with the pleasing intelligence that reinforcements were expected every moment, and besought them to hold their ground. Lieutenant Riddle, already well known as a reconnoitring officer, was the first to come to the assistance of his fellow soldiers, having been drawn to the place by the sound of the cannon, while out with a scouting party. The same circumstances induced general Brown to proceed rapidly to the scene of action, giving orders to general Ripley to follow with the second brigade. On his way he was met by major Jones, and from his information, he was induced to order up general Porter, with the volunteers, together with the artillery.

The situation of the brigade became every moment more critical. They had repulsed every attack of the enemy with desperate courage; but their strength must soon fail, when continually obliged to engage a fresh line. Fortunately, general Riall, from the obstinacy of the resistance, had by this time over-rated their force, and had despatched a messenger to general Drummond for reinforcements; his numbers engaged thus far having been more than double the American. About this time an awful pause ensued between the two armies; for a time no sound broke upon the stillness of the night, but the groans of the wounded, mingling with the distant din of

the cataract of Niagara. The shattered regiments were consolidated into one brigade, and placed as a reserve under colonel Brady, who, though severely wounded, refused to quit the field. The silence was once more interrupted by the arrival of general Ripley's brigade, major Hindman's artillery, and general Porter's volunteers, and at the same time of general Drummond with reinforcements.

In the meantime, that accomplished young officer, major Jessup, who had been ordered in the early part of the action, to take post on the right, had succeeded, during the engagement, after encountering great difficulty, in turning the left flank of the enemy. At the present moment, taking advantage of the darkness of the night and the incaution of the enemy, he threw his regiment in the rear of their reserve, and surprising one detachment after another, made prisoners of so many of their officers and men, that his progress was greatly impeded. The laws of war would have justified him in putting them to death; "but the laurel, in his opinion, was most glorious when entwined by the hand of mercy;" he therefore spared them, under circumstances where they certainly would not have spared him. One of his officers, captain Ketchum, had the good fortune to make prisoner of general Riall, and of the aid of general Drummond; the latter a most fortunate circumstance, as it prevented the concentration of the British force, contemplated by that officer, before the Americans were prepared for his reception. After disposing of his prisoners, major Jessup felt his way to the place where the hottest fire was kept up on the brigade to which he belonged, and drew up his regiment behind a fence, on the side of the Queenstown road, but in the rear of a party of British infantry, drawn up on the opposite side of the same road; he suddenly gave them a destructive fire, on which they broke and fled. "The major," says general Brown, "shewed himself to his own army, in a blaze of fire." He was ordered to form on the right of the second brigade.

General Ripley's brigade had by this time been formed for action, when orders were given for it to advance to the support of general Scott, against whom a fire was now

directed which he could not long withstand. General Ripley, with the quick discernment which characterizes the real commander, seeing that too much time would be lost before he could make his way through the skirt of woods, in the darkness of the night, decided at once upon his own responsibility, to adopt the only measure from which he saw a hope; and which being made known to the commander-in-chief, he instantly sanctioned. The enemy's artillery occupied a hill which was the key to the whole position, and it would be in vain to hope for victory while they were permitted to retain it. Addressing himself to colonel Miller, he inquired whether he could storm the batteries at the head of the twenty-first, while he would himself support him with the younger regiment, the twenty-third. To this the wary, but intrepid veteran replied, in an unaffected phrase, *I WILL TRY SIR*; words, which were afterwards given as the motto of his regiment. The twenty-third was formed in close column, under its commander, major M'Farland, and the first regiment, under colonel Nicholas, was left to keep the infantry in check. The two regiments moved on to one of the most perilous charges ever attempted; the whole of the artillery opened upon them as they advanced, supported by a powerful line of infantry. The twenty-first advanced steadily to its purpose; the twenty-third faltered on receiving the deadly fire of the enemy; but was soon rallied by the personal exertions of general Ripley. When within a hundred yards of the summit, they received another dreadful discharge, by which major M'Farland was killed, and the command devolved on major Brooks. To the amazement of the British, the intrepid Miller firmly advanced, until within a few paces of their line, when he impetuously charged upon the artillery, which, after a short but desperate resistance, yielded their whole battery, and the American line was in a moment formed in the rear, upon the ground previously occupied by the British infantry. In carrying the larger pieces, the twenty-first suffered severely; lieutenant Cilley, after an unexampled effort, fell wounded by the side of the piece which he took: few of the officers of this regiment were not either killed or wounded, By

the united efforts of the two regiments the British infantry was in a short time driven down the eminence, out of the reach of musketry, while their own cannon was turned upon them. This admirable effort completely changed the nature of the battle; every movement was now directed to this point, as upon the ability to maintain the height, the result entirely depended. While contending for the heights, the capture of general Riall had been announced by loud huzzas, on the part of the American troops below, which brought a shell among major Hindman's corps, exploded a caisson, and unfortunately killed the brave captain Ritchie. Major Hindman was ordered to bring up his corps, to post himself with his own and the captured cannon, to the right of Ripley's brigade, and between it and the twenty-fifth, while the volunteers of general Porter were drawn up on the right.

The British commander, stung with rage and mortification at this unexampled exploit of the Americans, now considered it absolutely essential to the credit of the British army, and to avoid insupportable disgrace, that he should make a desperate effort. Having been greatly reinforced, and placing his troops in the best possible order for the execution of his purpose, he now advanced upon Ripley, with a heavy and extended line, out-flanking him in both extremes. The Americans stood silently awaiting his approach, having received orders from the general to reserve their fire, until it could be rendered effective and deadly. The whole division of the British now advanced with a brisk step, until within twenty paces of the summit, when it poured in a rapid fire, and prepared to rush forward with the bayonet; the American line, being directed by the fire of the enemy, returned it with deadly effect; they were thrown into confusion, but being again rallied, furiously returned to the attack, and a most tremendous conflict ensued. For twenty minutes the action continued with violence indescribable. The British line was at last compelled to yield, and to retire down the hill. General Porter's volunteers emulated the conduct of the regulars. The gallant major Wood, of the Pennsylvania corps, and colonel Dobbin, of the New-York, gave examples of unshaken intrepidity. It

was not supposed, however, that this would be the last effort of the British general; the line was instantly restored, and the wounded transported to the rear. General Scott's brigade, during this period, had been held in reserve under colonel Leavenworth, colonel Brady having been compelled by the severity of his wound, to resign the command; the general's brigade-major, lieutenant Smith, and his aid, captain Worth, were both compelled to retire in consequence of their wounds; this brigade was now ordered to move to Lundy's-lane, with its right on the Niagara road.

After the lapse of half an hour, general Drummond was again discovered advancing to the assault with renovated vigour. The precaution at first adopted by general Ripley, was again observed; the fire of the Americans was dreadful, and the artillery of major Hindman, served with great skill, would have taken away all heart on the part of the British for this perilous enterprise, had not the example been set them by the Americans. The British general having rallied his troops, threw himself with his whole weight upon the American centre; he was firmly received by the gallant twenty-first, a few platoons only faltering, but which were soon restored by general Ripley. Finding that no impression could be made, the whole British line again recoiled, and fell back to the bottom of the hill. During the last contest, two gallant charges were led by general Scott in person, upon the enemy's left and right flanks, with his consolidated battalion; but having to oppose double lines of infantry, his attempts, which would have been decisive had they proved successful, were unavailing; they probably contributed, however, in shaking the British line. The general himself, being severely wounded in these charges, although he had hitherto remained unhurt during this perilous combat, was compelled to quit the field, after uniting the battalion with the twenty-fifth, and placing them under colonel Leavenworth.

Disheartened by these repeated defeats, the British were on the point of yielding the contest, when they received fresh reinforcements from fort Niagara, which revived their spirits, and induced them to make another

and still more desperate struggle. After taking an hour to refresh themselves, and recovering from their fatigue, they advanced with a new and more extended line, and with confident hopes of being able to overpower the Americans, who thus far had been denied both refreshment and repose. Our countrymen had stood to their arms during all this time, their canteens exhausted, and many almost fainting with thirst; and from the long interval, they had began to cherish hopes that the enemy had yielded. In this they were disappointed; but on discovering the approach of the British, their courageous spirit returned, and they resolved never to yield the glorious trophies of their victory, until they could contend no longer. The British delivered their fire at the same distance as on the last onset, which was returned by the Americans with the same deadly effect; but they did not fall back with the same precipitation, a fresh line supplied the place of the first, and the whole steadily advanced. A conflict, dreadful beyond description, ensued; the twenty-first, under its brave leader, firmly withstood the shock. The right and left repeatedly fell back, but were again rallied by the general, by colonels Miller, Nicholas, and Jessup. At length the two lines closed with each other on the very summit of the hill, which they contested with terrific violence at the point of the bayonet. Such was the obstinacy of the contest, that many battalions, on both sides, were forced back, and the contending parties became mingled with each other. Nothing could exceed the desperation of the conflict at the point where the cannon was stationed. The enemy having forced himself into the very midst of major Hindman's artillery, this officer was compelled to spike two of his pieces, and was warmly engaged across the carriages and guns. General Ripley now pressing upon the enemy's flanks, compelled them to give way, and the centre soon following the example, the whole British line fled a third time, and no exertions of their officers could restrain them, until they placed themselves out of the reach of the musketry and artillery. The British being now completely beaten, retired beyond the borders of the field, leaving their dead and wounded.

General Brown had received two severe wounds at the commencement of the last charge, and was compelled to follow general Scott, leaving the command to Ripley. This officer had made repeated efforts to obtain the means of removing the captured artillery, but the horses having been killed, and no drag-ropes to be procured, it was delayed until after the last contest, when orders were received from general Brown, to collect the wounded and return to camp. The British cannon were therefore spiked, and the smaller pieces rolled down the hill by major Hindman, who returned in good order with his corps; the whole reaching camp about midnight. It is much to be regretted, that these trophies of victory could not have been secured, as the circumstance gave occasion to the British, surprising as it may seem, to claim the victory. To high praise they certainly were entitled, but to claim the merit of "a complete defeat of the Americans," was outraging truth; and to be complimented for this, ought to infuse the blush of shame into the cheek of an honourable soldier. The British force engaged was little short of five thousand men, including fifteen hundred militia and Indians: nearly a third greater than that of the Americans. The loss on either side was proportioned to the nature of this dreadful and sanguinary battle; its aggregate amounted to one thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine; and the killed and wounded alone to one thousand three hundred and eighty-four. On the side of the British, one assistant adjutant-general, one captain, three subalterns, and seventy-nine non-commissioned officers and privates, were killed; lieutenant-general Drummond, major-general Riall, and three lieutenant-colonels, two majors, eight captains, twenty-two subalterns, and five hundred non-commissioned officers and privates, were wounded: the prisoners and missing, one aid-de-camp, (captain Loring) five captains, nine subalterns, and two hundred and twenty non-commissioned officers and privates; making in all eight hundred and seventy-eight men.

In the records of the most bloody conflicts, we seldom meet with so great a number of officers killed and wounded. The American loss was one major, five captains, five

subalterns, and one hundred and fifty-nine non-commissioned officers and privates, killed; major-general Brown, brigadier-generals Scott and Porter, two aids-de-camp, one brigade-major, one colonel, four lieutenant colonels, one major, seven captains, thirty-seven subalterns, and five hundred and fifteen non-commissioned officers and privates, wounded; and one brigade-major, one captain, six subalterns, and one hundred and two non-commissioned officers and privates, missing; making a grand total of eight hundred and fifty-one, and a difference of twenty-seven only, between the contending parties.

On arriving at the camp, the commander-in-chief ordered general Ripley to refresh the troops, and proceed to the ground in the morning, and to engage the enemy, if circumstances permitted. On examining his troops, general Ripley found he had but fifteen hundred men fit for duty; and reconnoitring the enemy, he found them drawn up in their first position, presenting a formidable appearance; it therefore would have been madness, with his men in their present state, to have renewed the combat; he therefore properly declined it. His conduct was hastily censured by general Brown, in his despatches to the government; and general Ripley, unfortunately, had for a long time to contend with the obloquy of public opinion; it was not until lately that the full extent of his merit was known; it is now generally acknowledged, that much of the praise, of the most brilliant victory that ever crowned our arms on the land, is due to the skill and valour of this officer.

General Ripley, finding himself unable to make a stand against the superiour force of the British, retreated to fort Erie, and anticipating the approach of the enemy, immediately set about extending its defences. The enemy, notwithstanding their pretended victory, did not think proper to follow up the Americans, until they had been reinforced by general De Watteville, with upwards of a thousand men, their whole force about five thousand. This formidable body appeared on the third of August, before a fortification, which, a few days previously, had been considered untenable, and commenced with regular approaches, hopeless of being able to prevail otherwise

than by a formal siege. The besieged, at the same time, laboured incessantly to complete their defences. The position which the American army had taken, for the purpose of defending itself against so great a superiority, possessed few natural advantages, and the work called fort Erie was little more than a small unfinished redoubt. It was situated about one hundred yards from the lake shore at its nearest angle, and on a plain of about fifteen feet of elevation. The fort could be considered as nothing more than the strongest point of a fortified camp, for a line of works was yet to be constructed in front, and extending to the right and left to the lake; the rear on the shore being left open. The fort itself probably did not occupy more than a sixth of the space taken up in the line of defences: the remainder could not be otherwise than hastily constructed, and, indeed, notwithstanding the slow and cautious approaches of the British, much of it was left incomplete until the last moment.

About the same time, a party crossed the Niagara, for the purpose of attacking Buffalo, and re-capturing general Riall. This party, under colonel Tucker, was repulsed by major Morgan, with a detachment of two hundred and forty men, although reinforced by a regiment. In this affair, captain Hamilton, and lieutenants Wadsworth and M'Intosh were killed.

The defences of fort Erie were sufficiently completed, by the seventh, to keep at bay an enemy, who had by this time learned to respect our arms, and from this day, until the fourteenth, there was an almost incessant cannonade with the enemy's batteries, who were gradually gaining ground. In the frequent skirmishes which took place between the outposts and reconnoitring parties, the Americans were generally victorious; in one of them, however, they lost major Morgan, a brave officer, who was sincerely lamented. General Gaines had arrived shortly after the commencement of the siege, and being the senior officer, assumed the command. On the night of the fourteenth, general Ripley, perceiving a bustle in the British camp, conceived that an assault was about to be made; he despatched a messenger with this intelligence to general Gaines, who was already apprised of it; dis-

positions were rapidly made, and the troops manifested great enthusiasm to engage the assailants.

General Drummond had made arrangements to assail every part of the American fortifications at the same instant; and general Gaines, not knowing where the enemy would make his attack, was prepared to meet him at every point. The fort and bastions were placed under the command of captain Williams, of the artillery: the battery on the lake was assigned to captain Douglass; a blockhouse, near the salient bastion, was occupied by major Trimble; the batteries in front, under captains Biddle and Fanning, supported by general Porter; and the whole of the artillery throughout the garrison, under major Hindman. The first brigade, consisting of parts of the eleventh, ninth, and twenty-second infantry, lately commanded by general Scott, now under colonel Aspinwall, was posted on the right; and general Ripley's brigade, supported Towson's battery and the line, upon the left. A few hours before the commencement of the assault, one of the enemy's shells exploded a magazine within the American works, which was succeeded by a loud shout from the besiegers, under the belief that the magazine of the fort had blown up. The shout was returned by the Americans, and captain Williams, amid the smoke of the explosion, renewed the contest by an animated roar of his heavy guns.

At half after two in the morning, the approach of the enemy's right column, which was one thousand three hundred strong, was distinctly heard on the left of the garrison. In this quarter, nothing but a line of loose brush, representing an abattis, intervened. The second brigade (major Wood commanding the twenty-first) and Towson's artillery, were ready to receive them. The British, under colonel Fischer, were permitted to approach within a short distance, when a tremendous fire was opened upon them, and their column fell back in confusion. The colonel, rallying his men, advanced furiously to the attack; but was again compelled to retire, with still greater loss. The possession of this battery being essential to the general plan of assault, he next essayed to pass the abattis by wading in the lake; but in

this unsuccessful attempt, nearly two hundred of his men were either killed or drowned, and the remainder fled to the encampment.

The other of the enemy's columns having waited until the first was completely engaged, (presuming that their own operations would by that means be facilitated) colonel Scott now approached on the right along the lake, while colonel Drummond, who had taken advantage of a ravine, which lay between the hostile camps, at the same moment rose up, and advanced to the assault in front. Colonel Scott was checked by the Douglass battery, and captains Broughton and Harding's New-York and Pennsylvania volunteers, the ninth infantry, under captain Foster, and a six pounder under the direction of colonel McRee. Their fire was so well directed, that the approaching column paused at the distance of fifty yards, and then recoiled. The column of colonel Drummond, however, composed of eight hundred select troops, firmly advanced to the point of the fort, which was strengthened by a temporary parapet breast-work, with two batteries and six field pieces. Suddenly applying his scaling ladders, he mounted the parapet, his officers calling out to the line at the Douglass battery to cease firing; this artifice for a few moments succeeded; the Americans, supposing the order to come from their own officers, suffered colonel Scott, who had rallied his men, to approach their line, by which the trick was discovered; it however availed nothing, for this column was assailed with so much effect, as to be compelled again to retreat, with the loss of its commander, and a third of its numbers. The front column was, in the meanwhile, with great difficulty thrown back, and the troops within the fort were reinforced from general Ripley's brigade, and general Porter's volunteers. Repeated assaults were made by colonel Drummond, and repulsed by colonel Hindman's artillery, and the infantry under major Trimble. After the defeat of colonel Scott's column, lieutenant Douglass was engaged in giving such directions to his guns, as to cut off the communication between colonel Drummond, and the reserve intended for his support, under colonel Tucker.

Colonel Drummond, although three times repulsed, was unwilling to renounce his undertaking. Availing himself of the darkness of the hour, which was increased by the smoke, he stole silently along the ditch, and suddenly applying his ladders once more, rapidly gained the parapet, crying out to his men to rush forward, and in the elegant phrase, in which the British are in the habit of expressing their esteem for us, *give the d——d Yankees no quarters!* This order was faithfully executed; and the most furious strife now ensued, that had been witnessed since the commencement of the assault. All the efforts of major Hindman, and the corps supporting him, could not dislodge the enemy from the bastion, though he could approach no further. Captain Williams was mortally wounded; lieutenants Watmouth and M'Donough, severely; the latter, no longer able to fight, called for quarters. This was positively refused by colonel Drummond, who repeated his instructions to his troops to deny it in every instance. The declining and almost exhausted strength and spirits of the lieutenant, being restored and roused by the shocking barbarity of this order, he seized a handspike, and with the desperation of madness, defended himself against the assailants, until he was shot by the colonel himself. This man survived an act, that was little better than assassination, only a few minutes; he received a ball in his breast, which terminated his inglorious life. Brutal courage deserves only our abhorrence; it is only when tempered with mercy, that valour is estimable among men. The enemy still maintained their position, notwithstanding the death of their leader, and repulsed every attempt to dislodge them until daylight: they had, in the meantime, suffered excessively; and the contest along the whole line of defences, with this exception, having ceased, considerable reinforcements were ordered up. The enemy began at last to recoil, and many were thrown over the bastion. The British reserve was now expected to come up to their support; the result, however, by this time, scarcely admitted a doubt. The cannon of the Douglass battery inflamed their approach, and the artillery of lieutenant Fanning already played upon them with great effect. A part of

the reserve was about to advance, when an explosion took place under the platform, which carried away the bastion, and all who were on it. The reserve fell back, and the contest, in a short time, terminated in the entire defeat of the enemy.

The British left on the field two hundred and twenty-two killed, among them fourteen officers of distinction; one hundred and seventy-four wounded, and one hundred and eighty-six prisoners, making a total of five hundred and eighty-two. The official statement of general Drummond makes it in all, nine hundred and five. The American loss amounted to seventeen killed, fifty-six wounded, and one lieutenant, Fontain, thrown out while defending the bastion, and ten privates, prisoners; in all, eighty-four men. It was not until all hopes of carrying the fort were at an end, that they deigned to take prisoners of a few wounded men, who fell into their power.

The explosion furnish the British with an excuse for their defeat; and they represented its consequences as much more serious than they really were, in order to bear them out; but it is well known, that the assault had already failed in every part, and the small body of men, in possession of the outer bastion, could not expect to subdue the whole garrison. Nor was the number killed by the explosion, so great as represented. The slaughter of the enemy took place during the assault, which had already lasted upwards of an hour. But is it not wonderful, that an enemy, who intended to put the garrison to the sword without mercy, should *complain* of any mode of annoyance, which would prevent the perpetration of their fell design?


The enemy now remained quiet in his entrenchments, until he received a reinforcement of two regiments, when he continued to assail the fort from his batteries, with little intermission, until the latter end of August. About this time, general Gaines was severely wounded by the bursting of a shell, which compelled him to retire to Buf-faloe.

The situation of the army in fort Erie had begun to excite considerable uneasiness; but the operations of sir George Prevost, about this time, in the vicinity of Cham-

plain and Plattsburg, rendered it for some time very uncertain whether any relief could be sent by general Izard. It afterwards appeared, that orders had been given to this officer by the secretary at war, but he was prevented, by a variety of causes, from proceeding as rapidly as could have been desired. The troops, however, were daily strengthened by the arrival of militia and volunteers; and general Brown, having sufficiently recovered from his wounds, returned to the command. The siege still continued with vigour on the part of the British, who had abandoned the idea of carrying the place otherwise than by regular approaches, although their force had been considerably augmented since their last defeat. The Americans laboured, with no less assiduity, to complete their fortifications; frequent skirmishes occurred, and a cannonade on either side was kept up, but nothing of importance took place until the seventeenth of September. General Brown observing that the enemy had just completed a battery, which could open a most destructive fire the next day, planned a sortie, which has been considered a military chef d'œuvre. The British force consisted of three brigades, of one thousand five hundred men each, one of which was stationed at the works in front of fort Erie, the other two occupied a camp two miles in the rear. The design of general Brown was to "storm the batteries, destroy the cannon, and roughly handle the brigade on duty, before those in reserve could be brought up." A road had previously been opened by lieutenants Riddle and Frazer, in a circuitous course through the woods, within pistol shot of the flank of the line of batteries, and with such secrecy as to have escaped the notice of the enemy. At two o'clock the troops were drawn up in readiness to make the sortie. The division commanded by general Porter, was composed of riflemen and Indians (under colonel Gibson,) and two columns, one on the right commanded by colonel Wood, the left commanded by general Davis, of the New-York militia; this was to proceed through the woods by the road which had been opened; while the right division of the troops, in the ravine already mentioned, was to be stationed between the fort and the enemy's works, under general Miller, with

orders not to advance until general Porter should have engaged their flank.

The command of general Porter advanced with so much celerity and caution, that when they rushed upon the enemy's flank, they gave the first intimation of their approach. A severe conflict for a moment ensued, in which those gallant officers, colonel Gibson and colonel Wood, fell at the head of their columns, and the command devolved on lieutenant colonel McDonald and major Brooks. In thirty minutes possession was taken of both batteries in this quarter, together with a block-house in the rear, and the garrison made prisoners. Three twenty-four pounders were rendered useless, and their magazine blown up by lieutenant Riddle, who narrowly escaped the effects of the explosion. At this moment the division of general Miller came up; general Brown having heard the firing, had ordered it to advance. In conjunction with colonel Gibson's column, he pierced between the second and third line of batteries, and after a severe contest, carried the first of these: in this assault general Davis fell, at the head of his volunteers. The whole of these batteries and the two block-houses, being in the possession of the Americans, general Miller's division inclined to the more formidable batteries toward the lake shore; at this moment they were joined by the reserve under general Ripley. Here the resistance was more obstinate, the work being exceedingly intricate, from the successive lines of intrenchments, contrived with studied complexity; a constant use of the bayonet was the only mode of assailing them; the enemy had also, by this time, received considerable reinforcements. General Miller continued to advance, although suffering severe loss in some of his valuable officers: colonel Aspinwall was badly wounded, and major Trimble dangerously. The twenty-first, under lieutenant colonel Upham, forming a part of the reserve, and part of the seventeenth, uniting with the corps of general Miller, charged rapidly upon the remaining battery, which was instantly abandoned by the British infantry and artillery. General Ripley now ordered a line to be formed, for the protection of the detachments engaged in destroying the batteries, and was engaged in making ar-



rangements for following up, against the rear of general Drummond, the success which had so far transcended expectation, when he received a wound in the neck, and fell by the side of major Brooks: he was immediately transported to the fort. The objects of the sortie having been completely effected, general Miller called in his detachments, and retired in good order, with the prisoners and the trophies of this signal exploit. Thus, in a few hours, the result of forty-seven days incessant labour was destroyed; and in addition to the loss of their cannon, upwards of a thousand of their men were placed hors de combat. The American loss amounted to eighty-three killed, two hundred and sixteen wounded, and a like number missing. Besides the gallant officers already mentioned, several others of great merit fell on this occasion: captain Armistead, of the rifle corps; Hall, of the eleventh infantry; Bradford, of the twenty-first, and Buel, of the volunteers; ensign O'Fling, of the twenty-third infantry, a meritorious officer; and lieutenants Brown, Belknap, and Blakesley, of the volunteers. The loss on the part of the British has not been accurately ascertained, but must have been very great; three hundred and eighty-five were taken prisoners. A few days after this splendid victory on the part of the British, for as such it was claimed by them, they broke up their encampment, and marched to fort George!

Soon after this affair, general Izard arrived with reinforcements from Plattsburg, and being the senior officer, superceded general Brown in the command. By this accession of force, and the completion of the defences of fort Erie, all apprehensions of any further attempt against it were removed. About the latter end of July, the secretary of war, hearing that the British were sending strong reinforcements from Montreal to Kingston, had intimated to general Izard, the propriety of moving the principal part of his force to Sackett's Harbour for the purpose of forming a junction with general Gaines, of threatening Prescott and Kingston, and at the same time detaching a part of his force to the aid of general Brown, in the prosecution of his part of the campaign. In pursuance of this intimation, the general moved to

Sackett's Harbour, with nearly all his effective force amounting to four thousand men, where he arrived on the seventeenth of September. The events which had in the meantime occurred, and which have been already detailed, had given a new face to the campaign. Shortly before the arrival of the general, he had received a letter from general Brown, giving information of his critical position, and calling for speedy relief. It was not before the twentieth, that general Izard was enabled to embark his troops, and it was sometime in October before he actually reached fort Erie. It will be seen, (in a subsequent chapter) that the post which he left was, soon after his departure, placed in a situation as critical as that which he had come to relieve. These are the unavoidable gross purposes, resulting from the prosecution of a war with a handful of men, along a frontier of such immense extent, and the absurdity of expecting these small corps to march to their mutual relief, or to act on concerted plans, at the distance of four or five hundred miles, subject to innumerable contingencies. Fortunately, before the arrival of general Izard, the success of the sortie planned by general Brown, had compelled the enemy to raise the siege. The approach of general Izard, in all probability, contributed somewhat to this event. Leaving a sufficient garrison under colonel Hindman, the army moved towards Chippewa, to operate offensively against the enemy; but nothing of moment was achieved for some time, in consequence of their acquired shyness. Before the close of the campaign, a gallant affair was achieved by general Bissil, of the second brigade of the first division. On the eighteenth of October, he was detached with nine hundred men, to the neighbourhood of Cook's mills, at Lyon's creek, for the purpose of destroying the enemy's stores in that quarter. After driving in a picket-guard, and capturing its officers, he threw across the creek two light companies under captains Dorman and Horrell, and a rifle company under captain Irvine, and then encamped. The next morning the detachment was attacked by the marquis of Tweedale, with twelve hundred men; the companies on the other side of the creek received the enemy's fire, and sustained their at-

tack until general Bissil had formed his men, and brought them to their support. Colonel Pinkney, with the fifth, was ordered to turn the enemy's right flank, and cut off a piece of artillery which had been brought into action, while major Bernard advanced in front, and was recommended to make a free use of the bayonet. These orders were rapidly carried into execution. The whole line began to recoil, and the reserve, composed of the fifteenth, under major Grindage, and the sixteenth under colonel Pearce, was no sooner discovered advancing, than the marquis gave orders to retreat to his intrenchments at the mouth of the river; he fell back in disorder, leaving his killed and wounded behind. After pursuing a small distance, general Bissil proceeded to the execution of his orders, in the destruction of the stores at the mills; after which he retreated, with a loss of sixty-seven killed, wounded and missing.

Soon after this affair, the weather growing cold, and the season for military operations drawing to a close, it was determined to transport the whole army to the American side; which was accordingly effected, after the destruction of the fort. The troops were distributed at Buffaloe, Black Rock, and Batavia.

Thus terminated the third invasion of Canada, if it can be properly called so; for it was not generally expected that any thing further would be accomplished, than keeping in check the forces of the enemy, and regaining what we had lost on our own side. At the opening of the campaign, general Brown indulged a hope of being able, in conjunction with commodore Chauncey, to subdue the British forces in the neighbourhood of lake Ontario, and possess himself of Kingston; but towards the beginning of autumn, so material a change had occurred in our situation, in consequence of the great augmentation of the British force on our borders, and the invasions of our territory on the sea-coast, and the Canada frontier, that all idea of making an impression on Canada, with the force then on foot, was abandoned. It was stated by the friends of the administration, that the best mode of protecting the Atlantic coast, was to threaten Canada, by which means, Great Britain would be compelled to concentrate

the greater part of her force, in that province. The American regulars did not exceed ten thousand, while those of the British, it has since been ascertained, exceeded twenty-thousand; nearly all veterans. The whole American army distributed in the different Atlantic cities, would not afford much dependence for defence, from the troops which might be sent against them, if Great Britain had been relieved from the defence of Canada. As to the conquest of this province, it is very questionable whether it would materially have benefitted us. It is well known that it contains the bitterest enemies to the American government and people, many of whom fled from this country during the contest for independence, and it is not likely that they would willingly be incorporated into our republick.

The most important results, however, followed the campaign on the Niagara. The developement of the character of American troops, under proper discipline, was productive of as much glory for this country, as of surprise to the enemy. During the two first years there was scarcely time to form officers, and during the last period of the war the army was composed of better materials; the aversion to enlistments was gradually subsiding, and commissions were sought by young men of education and talents; another year would have given an army, which Great Britain might have regarded with uneasiness. That spirit, which bestows superiority to man in every station, was beginning to discover its resistless power; the closing scenes of this campaign placed the army on a level with the heroick character of the navy. What is that spirit? It is the spirit of freedom; it is that which gives conscious dignity and worth to the soldier and the citizen. It is that which gave victories to Greece, and gained triumphs for Rome, and which has carried the power of Britain round the globe. This ennobling spirit animated the sons of freedom, and gave them strength to conquer in two pitched battles, on ground chosen by the veteran troops of England; and twice more to baffle and defeat the utmost efforts of their skill and courage: for *each American* felt, that he could not return to mingle with his countrymen without honour or

disgrace. Such was the valour which they displayed, that it was declared by the British officers who had seen severe service in Spain, that they had never encountered men like these. But as Britain falls below America in the liberality and wisdom of her institutions, so her sons must yield the Americans the wreath of valour. Worth here, alone, is nobility. Our Hulls, our Decatur, our Browns, are not obliged like the Wellingtons or Nelsons, to share their well earned honours, with the creatures of accident; perhaps with the worthless descendants of worthless ancestors. I am far from supposing that there is no intrinsic good among the hereditary English nobility, but certainly too many of them are born only to usurp the place of merit, and indulge the most idle and vicious propensities. It was proved to the world, that we could conquer upon the land as well as upon the sea. The battles of Niagara and Chippewa, were both won by a combination of military skill and personal courage; the defence of Erie, and the sortie, if achieved by the arms of great Britain, would have been ranked amongst the most distinguished acts of valour, since even their defeats are deemed worthy of applause. They have at last condescended to place us on an equality with them; the nation which never owned an equal before; they have even arrogated to themselves a share of our victories, by regarding our contest as a war between Greek and Greek; but we cannot admit that we are both alike actuated by that spirit of liberty, which distinguished Greece in the days of her renown.

In the course of the summer, several expeditions were undertaken to the westward. An attempt was made, with the co-operation of commodore Sinclair, to regain possession of Michilimackinack, by major Croghan. But the enemy was found too strongly fortified for any impression to be made by a force so inconsiderable. The gallant young officer effected a landing on the island, but soon found that the enemy was in such strength, as to render the capture of the place hopeless; he therefore, after a severe conflict, returned to the shipping, with the loss of a valuable officer, major Holmes, and about sixty in killed and wounded, among the latter major Dashea, of Kentuc-

ky. The expedition was not altogether useless; the British establishments of Mary's and St. Joseph, were destroyed. After leaving the island, commodore Sinclair left two of his schooners, the *Scorpion* and *Tygress*, to cut off the supplies of the British garrison. These were unfortunately surprised by a very superiour force of the enemy, and carried by boarding, after great slaughter.

About the same time, general M'Arthur, with about seven hundred men, marched from Detroit into the enemy's country, and after dispersing all the detachments in the neighbourhood of the Thames, destroying their stores, and taking one hundred and fifty prisoners, returned without loss.

CHAPTER XVII.

War on the sea-coast—Engagements between the enemy and Barney's flotilla in the Chesapeake—Plunderings of the British—Washington and Baltimore threatened—General Winder appointed to command the tenth district—Serious apprehensions from the British—Difficulties in collecting an efficient force for defence—Capture of Washington—The plunder of Alexandria.

THE shifting scenes of this war, carried on over a surface so extensive, and with objects so various, once more brings us back to the Atlantic sea-coast. With the return of spring, the British renewed their practice of petty plundering and savage devastation on the waters of the Chesapeake, but carrying it to an extent still greater than the year before. The flotilla already spoken of, for the defence of the inlets and smaller rivers, consisting of a cutter, two gunboats, and nine barges, was placed under the command of that gallant veteran, commodore Barney, and who, on several occasions, severely repressed the inroads of the enemy. On the first of June, he gave chase to two of the enemy's schooners; but on the appearance of a large ship, which despatched a number of barges to cut him off, the commodore ordered his flotilla by signal to sail up the Patuxent. Here he

engaged the enemy's schooners and barges, and succeeded in beating them off, inflicting considerable injury on them. The enemy, having been reinforced, made another attempt upon the flotilla with all their barges, but were again compelled to retire, being pursued to their ships. On the tenth, the enemy made a still more formidable attack upon the flotilla, with two schooners and twenty barges. After a smart action, the barges were driven to take shelter in the St. Leonard's from an eighteen gun vessel, which was then so roughly handled, at long shot, that her crew ran her aground and abandoned her. These attempts were frequently repeated until the twenty-sixth, when the commodore, having received a reinforcement of artillerists and marines, moved against the enemy's squadron, of which two of the vessels were frigates, and after an action of two hours, drove them from their anchorage. The commodore finding the blockade of the St. Leonard's raised, sailed out and ascended the Patuxent.

After this, the enemy was constantly engaged in making inroads on the defenceless and unprotected settlements and villages along the bay, and its various inlets. Benedict and Marlborough, on the Potomack, were plundered of considerable quantities of tobacco, merchandise, and stock. In the detail of their operations given by themselves, it appears to have been the uniform practice to destroy the shipping, carry away the tobacco, and other staples, and induce the negroes to join them, who were afterwards, it is said, retained in slavery in the West Indies. A great number of individuals, in easy and even affluent circumstances, were reduced to poverty. Several gallant attempts were made by general Taylor, and general Hungerford, to repress their incursions in Virginia, but the militia, hastily assembled, was generally found inefficient. At Kinsale, general Taylor was wounded and unhorsed, narrowly escaping capture. At this place, at Tocomoco, at St. Mary's, and various others, admiral Cockburn obtained a respectable booty of tobacco, negroes, and household furniture.

Towards the latter end of June, apprehensions began to be entertained, that the enemy had in view some more

serious object of attack, either Baltimore or Washington. Much alarm had been felt in these places the year before, but after it had subsided, an opinion was indulged, probably well founded, that a land force, greatly more considerable, than was then at the command of the British, would be required to make any serious impression upon either of these places, or even upon Annapolis and Norfolk; this was particularly proved in the attack upon the latter. It was justly thought that the enemy had received a lesson, which would render him cautious in attacking the more considerable towns. But the sudden and unforeseen events of Europe, had entirely changed the face of things; Britain was now able to supply what she was not possessed of the year before, a powerful land force. Towards the latter end of June, our government received certain intelligence from Messrs. Gallatin and Bayard, that our enemy was determined not to let slip the opportunity of gratifying revenge, and was about to send powerful reinforcements to America. From the English prints it appeared, that England was extravagantly elated by her success, and took to herself the whole merit of the great events on the continent, and in reality believed herself the mistress of the world. She was well acquainted with our situation; she knew that the regular troops on the Canada frontier could not at this moment be withdrawn, leaving powerful armies to penetrate the northern states; and she knew that it was impossible in the short space of time, which had elapsed since the occurrence of the singular change in the state of Europe, which no statesman had foreseen, to embody a considerable and efficient force. The American cities were all exposed to attack by land, although tolerably fortified against any approach by water. A few thousand regulars were scattered along a coast of fifteen hundred miles, and the only force to be opposed to their veteran soldiers, was inexperienced militia, drawn together on the spur of the occasion. There is no doubt that the militia constitutes the best materials for armies, because individually they are actuated by higher motives, than the enlisted soldier can always be; but in order to be efficient, to use the words of the great friend of this species of force, (Fletcher of Sal-

ten) "they must be on a right foot;" they must be encamped, disciplined, harmonised, accustomed to see danger, and the different corps taught to rely on each other, to obey and confide in their officers. This is not the work of a day. In the open field, where military evolutions are necessary, the novelties of the scene, as well as the want of reliance on each other, renders it impossible for this description of force to encounter, with effect, an army of veterans, used to dangers, and regularly compacted by discipline, so as to act, as it were, by one mind.

The attention of the president, being thus seriously awakened by the danger, to be apprehended if the news of the reinforcements, intended for the fleet then in the Chesapeake, should be true, called a council of the heads of departments, and suggested the propriety of collecting all the regulars within reach, of forming a camp of at least three thousand men, at some point between the Eastern Branch and the Patuxent, and of embodying at least ten thousand militia at Washington. These ideas appeared to meet the approbation of all; and there is little doubt, that had they been, or could they have been carried into execution, both the cities of Baltimore and Washington would safely have bid defiance to the British arms. Steps were immediately taken in furtherance of these views; a requisition was made of the whole quota of the state of Maryland, of six thousand; five thousand of that of Pennsylvania; two thousand of Virginia; besides the whole quota of the district of Columbia, amounting to two thousand more; making in the whole fifteen thousand, which it was thought would scarcely fail of bringing at least ten thousand into the field. It was ascertained, that about a thousand regulars could be depended on, besides a squadron of horse then in Pennsylvania, and some regulars who were ordered from North Carolina, and in addition, the men of Barney's flotilla, in case it should be found necessary to abandon it. Here was a formidable army on paper; but, with the exception of the regulars, these soldiers were yet quietly at their homes, the greater part at a considerable distance, and the work of drawing them out, embodying, arming and disciplining, yet to be performed;

each of these operations requiring time, and causing unavoidable delay.

A new military district, composed of Maryland, the district of Columbia, and part of Virginia, was formed, and on the fifth of July the command was given to general Winder, who had been a short time before exchanged. The duties assigned to this officer were amongst the most important entrusted to any one during the war; and were, in their nature, exceedingly arduous and difficult. The army, with which he was to defend the important cities of Baltimore and Washington, existed only on paper; and whether they could be brought into the field, or not, depended upon casualties beyond his control. The desire of distinction, and the sincere wish to serve his country, overcame every personal consideration, and he diligently employed himself, from the moment of his appointment, in visiting every part of the country, and in acquiring a minute topographical acquaintance with all those points, where the enemy would be most likely to make an attack. At the same time he was assiduously employed in collecting a force; in this, unexpected difficulties occurred: the governor of Maryland after issuing the drafts for three thousand men, found that scarcely as many hundred could be collected. With the governor of Pennsylvania, matters were still worse. He informed the secretary at war, that in consequence of the deranged state of the militia law, the executive had at that moment no power to enforce a draft; but that he would appeal to the patriotism of the people, in hopes that the legal objection would not be made. By a letter of the seventeenth of July, eight or ten days after the general had assumed the command, he was authorized to call upon the governor of Pennsylvania for the proportion of that state; but this letter did not reach him until it was too late. The effect, however, of the call, is mere conjectural, as it could be founded upon no authority, but merely depended on the inclination of individuals.

Thus seven thousand men were at once thrown out of the question, and of the remaining eight thousand men of this army on paper, two-thirds at least must be deducted, in allowing for other failures. Towards the beginning of

August, the general had about a thousand regulars upon which he could count with certainty, and about four thousand militia, the greater part yet at their homes; besides this disappointment in the contemplated force, he was involved in perplexity by not knowing where the enemy intended to strike, Baltimore or Washington; for admitting that this force had been sufficient to defend one place, it was not sufficient to defend both at the same time. On the failure of the draft in the state of Maryland, the force then imbodyed at Annapolis was, by consent of the governour, taken as part of the state requisition; and a brigade of Maryland militia, under general Stansbury, was also placed at the disposal of general Winder; but the inhabitants of Baltimore, near which they were collected, could not think of permitting them to leave the city, without reluctance, considering their own exposed situation.

Here is an impartial statement of the causes which resulted in the subsequent disaster; for under the circumstances, it scarcely could have happened otherwise, without one of those extraordinary turns of fortune, upon which we have no right to calculate. It is wrong in us to throw the blame exclusively on all, or any of the agents on the occasion. The blame must be shared by the nation, and partly by our political institutions; nor do I think the worse of them for their want of energy in assuming promptly a military attitude: we should have to resign too many blessings to possess the capacity; unless our militia can be regularly classed and disciplined.

The expected reinforcements arrived in the Chesapeake about the beginning of August, under admiral Cochrane, who was soon joined by the fleet in great force, under admiral Malcom. The expedition was destined against Baltimore or Washington; but until the last moment, it was uncertain against which in particular. To increase this perplexity, the enemy divided his force into three parts, sending one up the Potomack, under captain Gordon, for the purpose of bombarding fort Warburton, and opening the way to the City of Washington; the other, under sir Peter Parker, as if to threaten Baltimore; while the main body ascended the Patuxent, apparently with the intention of attacking commodore Barney's flo-

tilla, which had taken refuge at the head of that river, but with the real intention, as it was soon discovered, of attacking Washington. They proceeded to Benedict, which they reached on the nineteenth of August, and by the next day, had completed the debarkation of their land forces, under general Ross, to the number of six thousand; on the twenty-first they moved towards Nottingham, and on the following day reached Marlborough. The British flotilla, consisting of launches and barges, ascending the river under Cockburn, keeping on the right flank of the army. The day following, on approaching the flotilla of commodore Barney, it was set fire to by sailors left for the purpose, the commodore having already joined general Winder with his men.

General Winder was at this time, while the enemy was within twenty miles of the capital, at the head of no more than three thousand men; fifteen hundred of whom were militia just drawn into camp. The Baltimore militia had not yet arrived, and those from Annapolis, and the Virginia detachment, were on their way. The general's camp was at the Woodyard; he was still in doubt whether the British intended an attack upon fort Warburton, which could make but little resistance to the land forces, but could be formidable to the ships of the enemy, or intended to march directly to Washington. The first was certainly the safest mode of attack on the part of the enemy, and that he did not make it, can only be accounted for, from his perfect knowledge of the incapacity of the city at this moment for defence. The city could make no defence, but that of repelling the assailants in the open field: the only hope was in taking advantageous positions in the broken ground, bordered with woods, along the road through which they had to pass; but, as their numbers were such as to enable them to push out flanking parties, this would not avail in the end. The only mode of resisting them effectually, would have been by interposing sufficient numbers, to compel them to repeated engagements, and to harass their flanks and threaten their rear. On the afternoon of the twenty-second, the British army again set out, and after skirmishing with the Americans, halted for the night.

five miles in advance of Marlborough. General Winder now retired by the Woodyard, where he had before encamped, to a place called the Old Fields, which covered Bladensburgh, the bridges on the Eastern Branch and fort Warburton; for it was uncertain which of these directions the enemy intended to pursue. Colonel Monroe, the secretary of state, had been with him for several days, assisting with his counsel, and actively engaged in reconnoitring the enemy; on the evening he was joined by the president and heads of departments, who remained until the next evening. The anxious and painful situation of the general, rendered him desirous of benefiting by the counsel of the first officers of the nation; and their uneasiness in the urgency of the moment, induced them to hazard their opinions, perhaps too freely, in matters merely executive. In a critical moment, where prompt decision is necessary, too many minds, suggesting their various expedients, do more harm than good. But this was an interference, considering the anxiety of the moment, for which no one can be blamed. On the twenty-third, major Peter was detached with some field pieces, and captains Davidson and Stull's companies, to skirmish with the enemy near Marlborough, who advanced on him, and took a position near Old Fields, menacing it with an attack either that night or early in the morning. Apprehensive of a night attack, which might be fatal to him, general Winder retired to the city, intending to choose a position between it and Bladensburgh, where he could oppose the enemy with his whole force.

On the evening before, general Stansbury arrived with his brigade, at Bladensburgh, after a very fatiguing march, and immediately despatched his aid, major Wood-year, with the intelligence; and on the evening following, was joined by colonel Sterett's regiment, five hundred strong, and a rifle battalion under major Pinkney, late attorney-general of the United States. His command amounted to two thousand men. About twelve o'clock at night, the secretary of state arrived at the general's quarters, and communicating the circumstance of the enemy's advance on general Winder, advised him to fall

in the enemy's rear immediately; but the general objected, on the score of having been ordered to this post, and besides, that his men were so much harassed and fatigued by their march, a considerable portion having just arrived, that it would be impossible. During the night, several false alarms were given, by which the troops were prevented from taking repose, which they so much required after their fatigues, to the greater part of them unaccustomed. On the receipt of the intelligence of the retreat of general Winder, Stansbury, in consultation with his officers, determined to move towards the city. Before day, he crossed the bridge, and after securing his rear, halted for a few hours. Early in the morning he again moved forward, with a view of taking possession of some ground for defence, when orders were received from general Winder, to give battle to the enemy at Bladensburgh; he therefore retraced his steps, and between ten and eleven o'clock the troops were halted in an orchard field, to the left of the road from Washington to that place. About this time, colonel Monroe, at the request of general Winder and of the president, reached the brigade of general Stansbury, and offered his assistance in forming the brigade, so as to dispute the pass with the enemy; his aid was thankfully accepted; the enemy was then within three miles, in full march.

The best arrangements the time would permit, were made. About five hundred yards from the bridge, the artillery, consisting of six six-pounders, under the command of captains Myers and Magruder, was posted behind a kind of breast-work; major Pinkney's riflemen were placed in ambush to the right and left, so as to annoy the enemy in attempting to ford the stream, and at the same time to support the artillery. The fifth regiment was drawn up about fifty yards in the rear; and afterwards, perhaps unjudiciously, removed much further; the other parts of the brigade were so disposed, as to support the artillery, and annoy the enemy in his approach. Shortly after this order was formed, major Beall arrived with about five hundred men from Annapolis, and was posted higher up in a wood on the right of the

road. General Winder, by this time, had brought up the main body, and formed it in a line to the right and left of the road, in the rear of Stansbury's brigade, and the detachment under Beall, with the heavy artillery, under commodore Barney, posted on an eminence near the road. This line had scarcely been formed, when the engagement commenced, and the president and heads of departments, who had until now been present, withdrew; the president conceiving it proper to leave the direction of the combat to the military men.

About twelve o'clock, the enemy's column made its appearance on the hill which overhangs the stream, and moved down towards the bridge, throwing rockets, and apparently determined to force the passage. He now made an attempt to throw a strong body of infantry across the stream, but a few well directed shot from the artillery, cleared the bridge, and compelled the enemy precipitately to shelter himself behind some houses near it, and apparently having suffered considerably. The fire was briskly kept up, and after a considerable pause, a large column rapidly advanced in the face of the battery, which, although managed with great spirit by officers of acknowledged skill and courage, was unable to repress them; they still continued to push forward their column, which was constantly reinforced, until they were able to form a considerable body on the Washington road. The enemy had not advanced far, when a part of the rifle corps discharged their pieces and fled, in spite of the efforts of their commander, and of major Pinkney, to rally them. The remainder began their fire too soon, but with some execution. The British were every moment drawing nearer the artillery, which could no longer be brought to bear upon them; and besides, there were no troops sufficiently near to afford a support; it then became unavoidably necessary for it to retire, and was followed by major Pinkney's riflemen. One piece of artillery was spiked and left behind. The whole fell back upon the fifth regiment, the nearest rallying point. A volunteer company of artillery now opened a cross fire upon the enemy, who were advancing through the orchard, but with not much effect; but, from the shelter of

the trees, they were enabled to open a galling fire upon the fifth regiment. Colonel Sterett was ordered to advance, which he did promptly, until again halted in consequence of the other two regiments, of Stanbury's brigade, having been thrown into confusion by rockets, and having begun to give way. In a few moments, they took to flight, in despite of the exertions of general Winder, of general Stansbury, and other officers, to rally them. Sterett's regiment, Burch's artillery, and major Pinkney's riflemen, still maintained their ground with great firmness, and evinced a disposition to make a gallant resistance; but the enemy having by this time outflanked them, they were ordered to retire; this was unfortunately effected in confusion and disorder, the unavoidable consequence with militia, in its retreat. Thus the first line was completely routed. The Baltimore artillery had before this taken a position higher up on the hill. On the right, colonels Beale and Hood, commanding the Annapolis militia, had thrown forward a small detachment under colonel Kramer, which, after maintaining its ground some time with considerable injury to the enemy, retired upon the main body. Soon after the retreat of this detachment, the enemy's column, marching along the turnpike road, was suddenly exposed to the fire of commodore Barney, who opened an eighteen-pounder upon them, and instantly cleared the road; in several attempts to rally, they were again repulsed with great loss. In consequence of this, they attempted to flank the American line to the right, by passing through an open field; but this was frustrated by captain Miller, with three twelves, and his marines. The enemy continuing flanking to the right, and pressed upon the militia of Annapolis, who fled, after giving an ineffectual fire. The command of commodore Barney was left to maintain the contest alone; but the enemy no longer appeared in front; he continued to outflank, pushing forward a few scattering sharp-shooters, by which the commodore was wounded, and his horse killed under him, while several of his officers and men fell near him. His corps was by this time outflanked on both sides, and in the confusion, the ammunition wagons had been driven off. His men were

therefore ordered to retreat, the commodore himself was taken prisoner, and his pieces fell into the hands of the enemy.

The Georgetown and city militia, and the regulars, still remained firm, having been stationed in the rear of the second line, in positions the most convenient for annoying the enemy, and supporting the other corps. These being in danger every moment of being outflanked, orders were sent to general Smith, to retreat towards the city. Had the state of the British troops been known, this order would have been highly injudicious; it has since appeared, that they were at this moment, fainting with fatigue, and that, supposing the whole of the American force routed, they had only pushed forward a detachment of their army; there is no telling what effect might have been produced, by their coming thus suddenly in contact with what would have appeared the main body of the Americans. After proceeding a few hundred paces, they were joined by a regiment of Virginia militia, which had arrived in the city the evening before, but had not been ready till now to take the field. General Winder still entertained hopes of being able to rally his troops, and of fighting the enemy between this place and Washington; he had ordered the Baltimore artillery to move on towards the city, and expected to find that the cavalry and Stansbury's command, had fallen down the road to that place; he thought that they might yet be rallied on the regulars, and city and Georgetown troops, so as to make another struggle to save the capital. With this view, he rode forward for the purpose of selecting a position, but he soon found, that instead of moving towards Washington, they had scattered in every direction, and, as it afterwards appeared, the greater part had fled towards Montgomery court-house. No words can portray the grief of the city and Georgetown militia, at being thus compelled to retire, without having had the slightest opportunity of defending their fire-sides and their homes. On arriving at the city, the general was met by the secretary at war, and the secretary of state, and after a consultation, it was agreed, that, with the small remains of the army, it was in vain to think of making a stand; the

few scattered villages, which compose the city, occupying an extensive open plain, there was no position to be taken, at which the enemy might be opposed, and the capitol was a detached building, which could be easily set on fire; and even if troops were stationed in it, they could not prevent the enemy from proceeding to any part of the city they might choose to assail. It was therefore proposed to rally the troops on the heights of Georgetown. But the general soon found, that but few of the militia could be collected, the greater part had strayed off in search of food or refreshment, after having suffered much during the day; and others were almost exhausted, after the privations and fatigues which they had experienced. The next day he proceeded, with such as he could collect, to Montgomery.

Thus did we experience the mortification of having our capital entered by a hostile army. The wound to our national pride was great; for it was more a matter of feeling than of actual injury. It was at most but a desperate bravado on the part of the enemy, who was compelled to retire as rapidly as he had approached, and which had no effect upon the contest, other than to exasperate the people of this country, and of disposing both parties to join in carrying on the war. To use the common language, it was the name of the thing which produced mortification; for there was nothing wonderful in a large body of veteran troops stealing a march upon a new and unfortified town, and defeating an equal number of raw militia. The greater part of our force arrived on the spot so short a time before the battle, as not to have been permitted to take even some slight repose after their fatigue; the different corps and their officers were unknown to each other, and to the commander; the arrangements for meeting a powerful regular force, had to be made at the very moment of battle. That we should have been defeated under such circumstances, is not to be wondered at, and furnishes no inference unfavourable to militia, or to the officers who commanded. The British force would probably have met with the same success, had it moved at that moment against any of the larger cities, which were no more aware of their danger

than Washington. The president and heads of departments, on reviewing the force brought out for defence, despaired of success, and set about removing the archives of the government. The severe censure passed on general Winder, who had been unfortunate, but always meritorious, was highly unjust. Success is not the proper criterion in all cases; in Turkey it is regarded as such; but tyranny of no kind should find its way into America. It is the duty of the historian to rescue worth from the unmerited condemnation of the hour, or the abusive virulence of party spirit. The ablest generals have at times been placed in situations, where courage, and genius, were alike unavailing. If general Winder erred, his errors must be shared by some of the greatest men of our country. Few possess more acknowledged merit and ability; and he is entitled to the applause of his fellow-citizens for his conduct, at a moment when he required assistance; he abandoned a profession in which he was eminently distinguished, and sacrificed a lucrative practice, and, almost to the ruin of his fortune, embarked in the cause of his country.

The loss of the British, in this expedition, was little short of a thousand men, in killed, wounded and missing; that of the Americans, ten or twelve killed, and thirty or forty wounded. General Ross, after halting his army for a short time for refreshments, pushed on to Washington, where he arrived that evening about eight o'clock; and having stationed his main body about a mile and an half from the capital, he entered the deserted city, at the head of about seven hundred men. We have now to record the climax of that vandal barbarity, exhibited by Great Britain during this war. The American metropolis, or more properly its site, was entered by them without opposition; they found about nine hundred houses, scattered in groups over a surface of three miles, and two splendid buildings, probably the finest specimens of architecture in the new world; the capitol, though still unfinished, presented a noble structure; and the president's house, in point of taste, rivalling any building in Europe. By the admirer of the arts of every country, these splendid edifices could not be contemplated with-

out pleasure, nor their destruction without the most indignant feelings. Admiral Cockburn, already so unfavourably known in the United States for the species of devastating and plundering hostility which he had directed, now, conjointly with general Ross, who, on this occasion, withered every laurel he had gained in honourable war, issued orders for the conflagration of these noble edifices, with the valuable libraries of the capitol, and all the furniture and articles of taste or value, which they contained. The great bridge across the Potomack, was also wantonly burnt, together with an elegant hotel, and several other private dwellings. This base and savage destruction is detailed in the official letter of the British general, as a matter of perfect indifference. The blaze produced by the conflagration, was seen even in Baltimore, giving a terrible warning to its inhabitants. All that was combustible about the capitol and the president's house, was reduced to ashes, and the walls of these stately buildings, blackened and broken in melancholy ruin, remained for a time, the monuments of British barbarity. The American, who saw them long after, could scarcely refrain from swearing in his heart eternal hatred to Britain. "I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate; the fire had resounded in their halls."

On the consultation of the president with the heads of departments, it was resolved to destroy the publick stores at the navy yard, to prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands; on the retreat, the publick buildings, stores, and vessels were set on fire, and consequently destroyed, with the exception of the schooner *Lynx*, which escaped in an extraordinary manner. What remained, was destroyed by the enemy, who took particular pains to mutilate the beautiful monument erected in honour of the naval heroes who fell at Tripoli. The plundering of private houses was not carried on to the extent that might have been expected, probably from the shortness of the time which they remained; they retreated precipitately the next evening. It was now conjectured, that they meant to proceed immediately to Baltimore; the inhabitants at that place were in the greatest

consternation, which the arrival of the city militia, from the field of battle, was not likely to allay. A moment of silent, gloomy despondency prevailed, which cannot be described. In the midst of this disheartening panick, the citizens, notwithstanding, rejected all thoughts of capitulation, and under generals Smith and Stricker, they prepared themselves to oppose the enemy, and in all probability, they would have made that desperate resistance, which renders even inexperienced troops superiour to veterans, when fighting for their families and their homes. General Winder, with all the force he could collect, proceeded rapidly to Baltimore; by this time, however, it appeared that the British had retired to their shipping.

The squadron under captain Gordon, consisting of eight sail, passed fort Warburton two days after the retreat of the British. The fort had been abandoned and blown up by captain Dyson, in a most extraordinary manner; probably under the influence of the dreadful panick which generally prevailed. His orders had been to abandon it only, in case of an attack by the land forces, but on a mere rumour, and without waiting the enemy's approach, he thought proper to take this measure. On the twenty-ninth, the squadron reached Alexandria; and the inhabitants of that place being completely in the power of the captain, were compelled to offer terms for the preservation of the town from conflagration and pillage. The insatiable avarice of the enemy imposed the hardest conditions: all the merchandise of every description, whether in town, or removed since the nineteenth, was required to be put on board the shipping, then at the wharf, at the expense of the inhabitants, and the whole delivered to the enemy; that even such vessels as had been sunk, should be delivered up. These terms, somewhat modified, were complied with; and the captain descended with a fleet of prize vessels, and a rich booty. In the meantime, preparations had been made in haste, by our naval heroes, captains Porter and Perry, to throw difficulties in the way of his descent. The first, at the battery of the White House, was assisted by general Hungerford's brigade of Virginia militia, and captain Humphrey's rifle company; and at the battery at Indian

Head, captain Perry was supported by the brigade of general Stewart, and the volunteer companies of major Peter and captain Burch. From the third, until the sixth of September, the British vessels were generally annoyed in passing these batteries. Frequent attempts were also made by commodore Rodgers, by approaching the fleet with fire-vessels; but owing to a change of wind, they proved ineffectual. These respective forces were afterwards concentrated under commodore Rodgers, at Alexandria; he determined to defend the place, should the enemy, who was not yet out of the sight of the battery, think proper to return.

Sir Peter Parker, who ascended the Chesapeake, was not so fortunate as the other officers. He landed at night in the neighbourhood of Moor's Fields, with the view of surprising a party of militia, encamped under the command of colonel Reed. In this he was disappointed, for the militia having heard the approach of the barges, were prepared to receive him. Sir Peter Parker having landed, moved forward at the head of about two hundred and fifty men; but on approaching within seventy yards of the Americans, they received a heavy fire; he endeavoured to press forward on the centre of the line; in this he was foiled, and threw himself on the flank, where he was also repulsed. Colonel Reed being informed, that the cartridges were nearly expended, ordered his men to retire a small distance, until they could be supplied. In the meantime, the British having suffered a severe loss, thought proper to retire; carrying with them the wounded, among whom was sir Peter Parker, who died soon after.

The capture of Washington, we have seen, excited the most painful sensations throughout the United States; the indignant feelings of the people were at first levelled against the whole administration, but soon settled in laying the blame of the affair on the secretary at war, and general Winder. We are willing to throw the blame any where, sooner than acknowledge ourselves in the fault. It was not the fault of the secretary at war that the militia could not be called out, nor was it the fault of general Winder, that the greater part of his troops would not

stand their ground; nor was the administration to blame in not foreseeing the events of Europe, which no man in the world ever conceived. The president was abused in the newspapers of the day, for not suffering himself to be shot by the enemy, or at least taken prisoner. He did all, and more than his station, or years, required. What could he have done, after the city was abandoned by the American troops? The question is ridiculous. He returned immediately to the city after it had been evacuated by the enemy, and from its smoking ruins issued a proclamation, which did honour to his heart and head, and which tended to raise the desponding mind of his country. Against the secretary at war, the cry was every where so loud, that the president, from motives of prudence, intimated to him the propriety of suspending his functions for a time; this his pride would not permit him to do, and he therefore resigned. It appears from the official letter of general Ross, since published, that he had not conceived the idea of the attack on Washington, until within sixteen miles of it, and informed of its defenceless state; that the destruction of commodore Barney's flotilla had been his real and sole object. It was on his part, notwithstanding, a piece of unparalleled rashness, without a commensurate advantage to be gained. From the improbability of the attempt, it is said, that the secretary at war could not be persuaded, until the last moment, that it was seriously intended. General Win-der demanded an examination of his conduct, and a court, of which general Scott was president, honourably acquitted him.

The character of Great Britain will not soon recover from the infamy cast upon it, in consequence of the violations of the laws of civilized warfare, committed on our coast. The conflagration of Washington, and the plunder of Alexandria, not to mention the despicable species of bucaniering practised on the defenceless inhabitants, are without a parallel in modern wars. Napoleon, whom the British denominate the modern Atilla, entered the capitals of the principal nations of Europe, but was never disgraced by such wanton and unjustifiable destruction. These acts, grossly barbarous as they are, assumed still a

deeper infamy by the effrontery and falsehood with which they were justified. A letter from admiral Cochrane to the secretary of state, dated the day previous to debarkation, though not delivered until after the burning of the capitol, stated, that having been called upon by the governor-general of the Canadas, to aid him in carrying into effect measures of retaliation against the inhabitants of the United States, for the wanton destruction committed by the army in Upper Canada, it became imperiously his duty, conformably with the nature of the governor-general's application, to issue to the naval force under his command, an order to destroy and lay waste such towns and districts upon the coast, as might be found assailable.

The secretary of state, colonel Monroe, had no other difficulty in answering this extraordinary letter, than such as arose from the shocking depravity, which could thus unblushingly publish its falsehoods in the face of day. He could with truth reply, that in no instance had the United States authorised a deviation from the known usages of war; that in the few cases in which there had been even a charge against them, the government had formally disavowed the acts of its officers, at the same time subjecting the conduct of such officers to punishment or reprobation; that amongst those few, the charge of burning the parliament house in Upper Canada, was now for the first time brought forward; until now, such an accusation had not been made against the Americans; on the contrary, one of the most respectable civil functionaries at that place, had addressed a letter of thanks to general Dearborn, for the good conduct of his troops;* and moreover, that when sir George Prevost, six months afterwards, professedly proceeded to measures of retaliation, the affair of the brick-house was not mentioned. But what in the meantime, it was asked, were the affairs of the river Raisin, the devastations on the shores of lake Champlain, the

* The malignant falsehoods resorted to by the British to cover their outrages, are truly astonishing. The chancellor of the exchequer asserted in the British parliament, that the Americans at York, "had not only burnt the house of the governor, but also every house belonging to the meanest individual, even to a shell, and left the populace in a most wretched condition."

conflagrations and plunderings on the sea-coast; were these in retaliation for burning the parliament house? Was this building of such immense value, as to render it impossible for the nation to atone for its destruction? But we were told, that there were, besides, the burning of a few sheds and huts at Long Point and St. David's! And were not these unfortunate acts followed up by instant retaliation on the part of the British, while the American officers who committed them were dismissed the service of their country, although capable of pleading the uniform practice of the enemy in excuse? Were the conflagrations in the Chesapeake during the summer, in retaliation for these acts? or were they in *prospective* retaliation for the burning of Newark? If we do not mistake, the avowed object of the British governour in burning four or five villages, putting a garrison to the sword, and laying waste the Niagara frontier, was to retaliate the burning of Newark, an act the American government so promptly disavowed. Why did the governour of Canada, after this, declare to the world, that he was doubly satisfied; first with the disavowal of our government, and next with this ample measure of retaliation? Why was he at this very moment an advocate for honourable warfare on the northern frontier? How then could the conflagration of the noble buildings at Washington be in retaliation for the burning a brick-house, hired for the temporary occupation of the provincial legislature, or for the burning of Newark, of a few out-posts, and the cabins or huts of hostile savages! These, by the admission of the governour, had already been four times expiated, and each time by an increasing measure of retaliation.

Such pretexts are too absurd to impose upon the most ignorant. A lamentable barbarity has marked the conduct of the British in the war throughout, very different from that of the United States, who sincerely endeavoured to avoid whatever might stand in the way to the most friendly relations, on the restoration of peace. At the

* The burning of the Indian village on the river Thames, called the Moravians—not the Moravians whom our countryman Hackenwelder devoted his life to civilize and improve, but a horde of savages in the employment of Great Britain.

very opening of the war, the British officers permitted the savages to fight by their sides, while we declined their aid; they not only made them their allies, but did not interfere to prevent their commission of horrors, whose recital must shock every sentiment of humanity. When the British admirals visited our sea-coast, and no complaints had been made against us; when the complaints were on our side; when there could not have been even a pretended pretext of retaliation, they plundered and burnt the villages on the Chesapeake, they plundered the defenceless planters of their stock, of their negroes, of their furniture, and at Hampton even transcended the abominations of the river Raisin. On the borders of Canada, the same course of burning or plundering was pursued, and under the rage excited by these series of outrages, an American officer ventured at last, under a misconstruction of the orders from his superiour, to destroy an English village; this unhappy affair, was gladly seized as the pretext, for the *first avowed retaliation*, and in consequence, a whole frontier was laid waste! Their outrages, until this time, were without pretext for retaliation. In the meantime, what was their treatment to American prisoners, and to those who were dragged from their ships to be enslaved, and what was the treatment of British subjects prisoners with us? What pretext of retaliation covers the violation of neutral ports, in the capture of our vessels confiding in their sanctuary? What pretexts warrant the barbarous orders of their officers, to refuse quarter to men opposed to them in honourable battle? When is the measure of retaliation to be filled, for a few unauthorised acts by individuals, acts which would occur in the best regulated war? It now appears by the letter of admiral Cochrane that nothing short of the entire devastation of our whole sea-coast, containing many populous cities, and several millions of people, would satisfy this unrelenting enemy. No; these unfounded pretexts only served to aggravate the outrages which that enemy had committed. The letter of admiral Cochrane scarcely deserved the notice of the secretary of state, but the refutation was certainly most ample. It is impossible to suppose, that such conduct was not as severely reprobated by the great mass of the English

people, as it was by us. The minority in parliament (who, by the by, with them represents the majority of the nation) pronounced it to be disgraceful to their country.

It has been the opinion of some, that our government was reprehensible in not resorting, at an early period, to retaliatory measures; but there is no American at this day, who does not reflect with pleasure, that in no instance did our government resort to such measures; had the war continued much longer, it would perhaps have been unavoidable. It is difficult to refrain from drawing a comparison between the devastating order of admiral Cochrane, and the order of general Brown, issued about the same time, on his entering Canada. "Upon entering Canada," said he, "the laws of war will govern: men found in arms, or otherwise engaged in the service of the enemy, will be treated as enemies; those behaving peaceably, and following their private occupations, will be treated as friends. Private property will, in all cases, be held sacred; publick property, wherever found, will be seized and disposed of by the commanding general. Any plunderers shall be punished with death, who shall be found violating this order."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sensations produced by the capture of Washington, in Europe, and in England—Effect of this event in the United States—Glorious defence of Baltimore—The retreat of the British—Capture of the British squadron on lake Champlain—Repulse of sir George Prevost—The British fleet leaves the Chesapeake, and a part sails to the south.

THE capture of Washington was, at first, boasted of by the British ministry, as a most signal exploit; but it was viewed in a very different light on the continent. To say nothing of the prosecuting hostilities with augmented rigour, at a moment when there was a negotiation for peace, the wanton acts of barbarity roused the indignation of all the powers of Europe; and in the British parliament, so great a sensation was excited, as to cause its perpe-

trators to shelter themselves from publick odium, by the basest falsehoods: the ministry were compelled to make a statement, that instructions had been sent to the coast of America, to desist from further inflictions of vengeance.

But if the effect was powerful abroad, it was unexampled throughout the United States. Party spirit, that political fiend, instantly fled, and with it fled the dissensions which almost paralyzed the efforts of the nation. But one voice was heard from one end of the continent to the other; a glorious union was brought about, and a nation of freemen was seen to rise in its strength. Those who had at first opposed the war, from an opinion of its impolicy, or who condemned the invasion of Canada, now saw only a powerful nation about to precipitate her armies on America, with the avowed intention of desolating our fair possessions. The poison of political dissensions, was dead with the political death of Napoleon; and who could now say, that Britain was not actuated by the mere thirst for revenge, or the less honourable thirst for plunder? The war now came home to the interests and feelings of every man, and the scenes of preparations, which were exhibited over the continent, were the most animated that could be conceived. The whole country was in motion; every town was a camp; and in the cities, the peaceful avocations of the citizens, which the war until now had scarcely interrupted, were laid aside. All the principal cities selected their committees of defence, and the whole of the population moved in bands, to the sound of martial musick, to the daily occupation of labouring on the entrenchments and fortifications.

The New England states, at first so much averse to the war, now exhibited their characteristick activity and energy, and gave at once a satisfactory proof that nothing was further from their intentions, than seceding from the confederation. The governour of Vermont, who had the year before made an attempt to recall the militia of the state from the service of the United States, and on which occasion the militia nobly refused to obey him, now endeavoured to atone for his conduct, by calling them forth in the most animated manner, to join the standard of their country. The American ladies, always conspicuous in the

history of America, for their patriotick conduct in times of difficulty and danger, never appeared so lovely in their zeal for their country.

The first object of attack, it was rightly conjectured, would be Baltimore; the cities of Philadelphia and New-York waited the result with as much anxiety, as if their fate depended upon its successful issue; in this, they perhaps had reason; for should Baltimore fall, during the panic which succeeded the capture of Washington, and before the other cities would have time to place themselves in an attitude of defence, they could make but a feeble resistance. After the first moment of despondency, occasioned by the capture of Washington, had subsided in Baltimore, and it was discovered that the place would not be assailed immediately, the inhabitants set about making preparations for defence. Under the direction of general Smith, a ditch was opened, and a breast-work thrown up by the inhabitants, on the high ground to the north-east (to effect which every class of people united,) so as completely to protect the town in the only quarter in which it was accessible by land forces.

In a few days, a considerable number of militia arrived from Pennsylvania and Virginia; and the spirits of the inhabitants were greatly animated by the arrival of the naval veteran, commodore Rodgers, with his marines, who took possession of the heavy batteries on the hill. A brigade of Virginia volunteers, together with the regulars, was assigned to general Winder, and the city brigade to general Stricker; the whole under the command of major-general Smith; the two latter, distinguished revolutionary officers: general Stricker had served from the commencement to the conclusion of that war, and shared in many important battles. The approach to the city by water was defended by fort M'Henry, commanded by major Armistead, with about sixty artillerymen under captain Evans, and two companies of sea fencibles, under captains Bunbury and Addison; of these, thirty-five were on the sick list. As this number was insufficient to man the batteries, major Armistead was furnished with two companies of volunteer artillery, under captain Berry and lieutenant Pennington, and a company under judge Nicholson, (chief justice of

Baltimore county) which had tendered its services. Besides these, there was a detachment of commodore Barney's flotilla, under lieutenant Redman. General Winder had also furnished about six hundred infantry, under lieutenant colonel Steuart and major Lane, consisting of detachments from the twelfth, fourteenth, and thirty-sixth regiments of the United States troops, which were encamped under the walls of the fort. The total amounted to about one thousand men. Two batteries to the right of fort M'Henry, upon the Patapsco, to prevent the enemy from landing during the night, in the rear of the town, were manned, the one by lieutenant Newcomb, with a detachment of sailors; the other, by lieutenant Webster, of the flotilla; the former was called fort Covington; the latter, the City Battery.

It was equally important to the safety of the city, that in the event of an attack by land and naval forces, both should be repelled; for in case fort M'Henry was silenced by the shipping, there would be nothing to prevent the destruction of the town; and if the land forces of the enemy were successful, the fort could no longer be of any avail, and would even be untenable. To the defence of fort M'Henry, and to the repulse of the British from the lines, the inhabitants looked for safety. Independently of the devastating orders of Cochrane, and the recent scenes at Washington and Alexandria, this city was a selected object of the vengeance of the enemy, in consequence of her active and patriotick exertions during the war. No one can imagine to himself a just picture of the state of anxious feeling, among fifty thousand people of all ages and sexes, for the approaching crisis, which would determine the safety or destruction of their city. And even in case of successful resistance, the most painful incertitude hung over the fate of those who were to risk their lives in its defence, not strangers or mercenaries, but their bosom friends, their brothers, their sons and husbands; every one, even old men and boys, who could wield a musket, were found in the ranks. The committee of safety, composed of those advanced in life, and the most influential citizens, (among whom was the respectable colonel Howard, a hero of the revolution,) took a large share in the preparations to meet the approaching danger.

The British army having re-embarked on board the fleet in the Patuxent, admiral Cochrane moved down the river, and proceeded up the Chesapeake; and on the morning of the eleventh of September, appeared at the mouth of the Patapsco, about fourteen miles from the city of Baltimore, with a fleet of ships of war and transports, amounting to fifty sail. On the next day, the land forces, to the number of at least six thousand men, the veterans of Wellington, debarked at North Point, and under the command of general Ross, took up their march for the city. General Stricker claimed for the city brigade, under his command, the honour of being the first to meet the invader, and was accordingly detached by general Smith, in anticipation of the landing of the British troops. On the eleventh, general Stricker proceeded on the road to North Point, at the head of three thousand two hundred effective men; consisting of the fifth regiment, under lieutenant-colonel Sterett, five hundred and fifty strong; six hundred and twenty of the sixth, under lieutenant-colonel M'Donald; five hundred of the twenty-seventh, under lieutenant-colonel Long; five hundred and fifty of the thirty-ninth, under lieutenant-colonel Fowler; seven hundred of the fifty-first, under lieutenant-colonel Amey; one hundred and fifty riflemen, under captain Dyer; one hundred and fifty cavalry, under lieutenant-colonel Biays; and the Union Artillery, of seventy-five men, and six four-pounders, under captain Montgomery, (attorney general of the state.) A light corps of riflemen and musketry, under major Randal, taken from general Stansbury's brigade, and the Pennsylvania volunteers, were detached to the mouth of Bear creek, with orders to co-operate with general Stricker, and to check any landing which the enemy might effect in that quarter.

At six o'clock, P. M. general Stricker reached the meeting-house, near the head of Bear creek, seven miles from the city. Here the brigade halted, with the exception of the cavalry, who were pushed forward to Gorsuch's farm, three miles in advance, and the riflemen, who took post near the blacksmith's shop, two miles in advance of the encampment. The next morning (the twelfth) at seven o'clock, information was received from the videttes, that

the enemy were debarking troops under cover of their gun vessels, which lay off the bluff at North Point, within the mouth of the Patapsco river. The baggage was immediately ordered back under a strong guard, and general Stricker moved forward the fifth and twenty-seventh regiments, and the artillery, to the head of Long Log lane, resting the fifth with its right on the head of a branch of Bear creek, its left on the main road, while the twenty-seventh was posted on the opposite side of the road, in a line with the fifth. The artillery was posted at the head of the lane, in the interval between these two regiments. The thirty-ninth was drawn up three hundred yards in the rear of the twenty-seventh, and the fifty-first, the same distance in the rear of the fifth; the sixth regiment was drawn up as a reserve within sight, half a mile in the rear of the second line. Thus judiciously posted, the general determined to wait an attack, having given orders, that the two regiments composing the front line, should receive the enemy, and if necessary, fall back through the fifty-first and thirty-ninth, and form on the right of the sixth, posted in reserve.

The general now learned, that the British were moving rapidly up the main road, and at the moment when he expected their approach to be announced by the riflemen, stationed in the low thick pine and firs, in advance, greatly to his chagrin, he discovered this corps falling back upon the main position, having listened to a groundless rumour, that the enemy were landing on Back river, to cut them off. This part of the general's plan having been frustrated, he placed the riflemen on the right of his front line, by this means better securing that flank. The videttes soon after bringing information, that a party of the enemy were in a careless manner carousing at Gorsuch's farm, several of the officers offered their services to dislodge him. Captains Levering's and Howard's companies, from the fifth, about one hundred and fifty in number, under major Heath, of that regiment; captain Aisquith's, and a few other riflemen, in all about seventy; a small piece of artillery, under lieutenant Stiles, and the cavalry, were pushed forward, to chastise the insolence of the enemy's advance, and to evince a wish, on the

part of the American army, to engage. The detachment had scarcely proceeded half a mile, when they came in contact with the main body of the enemy; a sharp skirmish ensued, in which major Heath's horse was shot under him, and several of the Americans killed and wounded, but not unrevenged, for in this affair the enemy lost their commander-in-chief, general Ross. This officer had imprudently proceeded too far, for the purpose of reconnoitring, when he was killed by one of the company of captain Howard, who was in the advance.* After the death of Ross, the command devolved on colonel Brook, who continued to push forward, notwithstanding this occurrence. The American detachment fell back, and the general conceiving the two companies of Howard and Levering, to be too much fatigued to share in the approaching conflict, they were ordered to form on the reserve, not without a request on their part, to be permitted to share the perils of their townsmen. At half past two o'clock, the enemy commenced throwing rockets, which did no injury, and immediately captain Montgomery's artillery opened his fire upon them, which was returned by a six-pounder and a howitzer upon the left and centre. The fire was brisk for some minutes, when the general ordered it to cease on his side, with a view of bringing the enemy into close cannister distance. Perceiving that the efforts of the British were chiefly directed against the left flank, the general brought up the thirty-ninth into line on the left of the twenty-seventh, and detached two pieces of artillery on the left of the thirty-ninth; and still more completely to protect this flank, which was all important, colonel Amey, of the fifty-first, was ordered to form his regiment at right-angles with the line, resting his right on the left of the thirty-ninth. This movement was badly executed, and created some confusion in that quarter, but was soon rectified with the assistance of the general's aid, major Stevenson, and the brigade-majors, Calhoun and Frailey.

* The death of general Ross had been ascribed to an apprentice boy, armed with a rifle, who fired from behind a tuft of bushes, and forfeited his life for his temerity. This matter is still in dispute—having no opportunity of investigating it, I must leave it so.

The enemy's right column now displayed, and advanced upon the twenty-seventh and thirty-ninth. Unfortunately at this juncture, the fifty-first, from some sudden panick, after giving a random fire, broke and retreated in such confusion, as rendered it impossible to rally it, and occasioned the same disorder in the second battalion of the thirty-ninth. The fire by this time became general from right to left; the artillery poured an incessant and destructive stream upon the enemy's left column, which endeavoured to shelter itself behind a log house, but this was instantly in a blaze; captain Sadtler having taken the precaution to fire it, as soon as it was abandoned by him and his yagers. About ten minutes past three, the British line came on with a rapid discharge of musketry, which was well returned by the fifth, the twenty-seventh, and the first battalion of the thirty-ninth, who maintained their ground in spite of the example set by the intended support on the left. The whole of the general's force with this diminution, scarcely amounted to fourteen hundred, to which was opposed the whole of the enemy. The fire was incessant, until about twenty-five minutes before four o'clock, during which time general Stricker gallantly contended against four times his numbers; but finding that the unequal contest could be maintained no longer, and that the enemy was about to out-flank him, in consequence of the flight of the fifty-first, he was compelled to retire upon his reserve, which he effected in good order. Here he formed his brigade, but the enemy not thinking it advisable to pursue, he fell back, and took post on the left of the line, a half a mile in advance of the entrenchments, where he was joined by general Winder, who had been stationed on the west side of the city, but was now ordered, with the Virginia brigade and captain Bird's United States dragoons, to take post on the left of general Stricker.

The conduct of the Baltimore brigade, with the exception of the fifty-first, and the second battalion of the thirty-ninth, who were seized with the panick to which raw troops are so much subject, deserved the highest praise. Veterans could not have done more; their loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to one hundred and sixty-three.

(amongst whom were some of the most respectable citizens of Baltimore,) about an eighth of the force engaged. Adjutant James Lowry Donaldson, of the twenty-seventh, (an eminent lawyer,) was killed in the hottest of the fight; major Heath and major Moore, and a number of other officers, were wounded. The loss of the British was nearly double that of the Americans, according to their own acknowledgment, and probably much greater. This unexpected resistance had a happy effect upon the enemy; in their official statements, they computed the American force at six thousand, a great proportion regulars, and estimated our loss at one thousand, from which we may infer their opinion of the manner in which they were received.

The general in his report particularly mentioned the good conduct of lieutenant-colonel Sterett, and major Heath, and major Barry, of the fifth; captain Spangler, of the York (Pennsylvania) volunteers; adjutant Cheston, who was slightly wounded; lieutenant-colonel Long, of the twenty-seventh, which regiment "was unsurpassed in bravery, resolution, and enthusiasm;" lieutenant-colonel Fowler and major Steiger, of the thirty-ninth, and the volunteer companies attached to this corps; of captain Quantril, from Hagerstown, and captain Metzgar, from Hanover, (Pennsylvania) the former of whom was wounded; captain Montgomery had a distinguished share in the action, and gained great honour for himself and his company. Majors Calhoun and Frailey, and the general's aid, major George P. Stevenson, were highly complimented in general orders; majors Moore and Robinson, of the twenty-seventh, were conspicuously active throughout the engagement. Many were the acts of patriotism that would deserve to be remembered.*

* It is difficult to pass in silence the conduct of the venerable James H. McCulloch. Although nearly seventy years of age, and of a weakly frame, he proceeded with a few old men like himself, and requested permission to stand in the ranks of the company, which he had commanded twenty years before; he was severely wounded, and fell into the hands of the enemy. The old gentleman was, at first, a subject of mirth to the British officers, who jested at the idea of a person of his years, with one foot in the grave, turning out as a common soldier; but their jest was changed to admiration, on the arrival of the accomplished

The result of this affair, when communicated to the lines, with the death of the British general, served to cheer the spirits of the militia, and inspire confidence. The brigades of generals Stansbury and Foreman; the seamen and marines under commodore Rodgers; the Pennsylvania volunteers, under colonels Cobean and Findley; the Baltimore artillery under colonel Harris, and the marine artillery under captain Stiles, manned the trenches and battery, and in this situation spent the night under arms prepared to receive the enemy. The enemy made his appearance the next morning, in front of the entrenchments, at the distance of two miles, whence he had a full view of the position of the Americans. During the morning, by his manœuvres to the right, he seemed to show an intention of coming down by the Harford and York roads; to baffle this design, generals Winder and Stricker were ordered to adopt their movements accordingly. The British were, in consequence, compelled to concentrate their force in front; and to approach within a mile of the entrenchments, showing an intention of attacking the position that evening. General Smith, therefore, immediately drew generals Winder and Stricker nearer to the right of the enemy, with a view of falling upon his rear, in case he should make the attempt, or think of retreating in the morning.

In the meantime, the naval attack had already commenced. The fleet, after landing the troops at the Patapsco, proceeded to bombard fort M'Henry, which commands the entrance of the harbour. On the thirteenth, about sunrise, the British had brought sixteen ships within two miles and a half of the fort. Major Armistead ar-

young gentleman, his son, a surgeon in the service of the United States, and when they learned he was the collector of the port of Baltimore. Such an incident proved a spirit of resistance, as discouraging to the foe as a battle. Mr. N. Williams, a senator of Maryland, was shot through the body, and left on the field; his brother, a wealthy merchant, was severely wounded in the thigh. Mr. Hollingsworth, another senator, was also left wounded on the field.—Amongst the citizens of note who devoted themselves on this occasion, none is more deserving of being remembered, than major Isaac M'Kim, one of the aids of general Smith, who, by his personal exertions, rendered the most essential service to the cause. These individuals are named, to show the kind of materials of which the troops were composed

ranged his force in the following manner: The regular artillerists under captain Evans, and the volunteers under captain Nicholson, manned the bastions in the star fort; captains Bunbury's, Addison's, Rodman's, Berry's, and lieutenant commandant Pennington's command, were stationed on the lower works; and the infantry, under lieutenant-colonel Steuart and major Lane, were in the outer ditch, to meet the enemy at his landing, should he make such attempt. The attack now commenced from five bomb-vessels, at the distance of two miles; when finding themselves sufficiently near, they anchored, and kept up an incessant bombardment, while they were at such a distance as to be out of the reach of the guns of the fort. The situation, although painfully inactive, was highly perilous; yet every man stood to his post without shrinking. One of the twenty-four pounders, on the south-west bastion, under captain Nicholson, was dismounted, and killed his second-lieutenant, and wounded several of his men. The enemy now approached somewhat nearer, so as to be within striking distance. A tremendous fire was instantly opened from the fort, which compelled him precipitately to regain his former position. The bombardment was kept up during the whole day and night. The city, thus assailed on both sides, awaited the result with death-like silence, and yet no eye was closed in sleep. Suddenly, about midnight, a tremendous cannonade was heard in the direction of the fort, and the affrighted population believed that all was over. Their fears were soon quieted, by the information that some barges of the enemy, the number not known, had attempted to land, but were compelled to draw off with all possible haste, after great slaughter, by lieutenants Webster and Newcomb, who commanded the city battery and fort Covington. By the next morning the bombardment ceased, after upwards of fifteen hundred shells had been thrown; a large portion of which burst over the fort, and scattered their fragments amongst its defenders; a great number fell within the works, and materially injured two of the publick buildings, and two slightly. There were four killed and twenty-four wounded; among the former, lieutenant Clagget and sergeant Clemm, of captain Nicholson's volunteers, greatly lament-

ed by their fellow-citizens for their personal bravery and high standing in private life.

In the course of the night, admiral Cochrane held a communication with the commander of the land forces, and the enterprise being deemed impracticable, it was mutually agreed to withdraw. The bombardment still continued, after the retreat commenced, in order to keep up the attention of the Americans, while the enemy, favoured by the extreme darkness of the night and the continued rain, took up their march unobserved. In the meantime, the Americans waited the approach of day with much anxiety. About ten thousand men were disposed along the lines; and there is every reason to believe that they would have repelled the enemy with great loss, had he made an attack. Commodore Rodgers, with his brave seamen, would have given them a warm reception from his batteries. These were commanded principally by the officers of the *Guerriere*—lieutenants Gamble, Kuhn, Rutter, Frazier, together with sailing-masters De La Rouch and Ramage, and other naval officers, who inspired confidence by their presence. The hero of lake Erie, commodore Perry, (although excluded from active command by indisposition) was, however, found on the lines when the attack was expected. Captain Spence took an active part in the preparations for defence. At day-light the enemy had disappeared. General Winder was immediately detached in pursuit, with the Virginia brigade and captain Bird's dragoons. At the same time major Randal was despatched with his light corps, and all the cavalry was put in motion for the same object. The great body of the troops were, however, so worn out with continued watchings, and with being under arms during three days and nights, exposed the greater part of the time to so very inclement weather, that it was found impracticable to do any thing more than pick up a few stragglers. The time which had elapsed since the retreat of the enemy, had given them an opportunity of protecting their embarkation, in such a manner as to prevent any part of their rear from being cut off. The next day the fleet descended the bay, to the great joy of the city of Baltimore, for this providential preservation.

The intelligence of this happy event was received in the neighbouring cities with demonstrations of joy, which cannot be described. The brave defence of Baltimore, soothed the public feeling for the affair of Washington. But one moment before, the popular dismay appeared to have reached its achme, and the most gloomy anticipations seemed about to be realized. The case of Baltimore came home to every individual bosom, for all the larger towns were equally threatened with devastation. The feelings of the inhabitants of the city itself, can with difficulty be conceived: measures were taken to celebrate the occurrence, to reward those who held distinguished commands, and to perpetuate the memory of this awful period. To those who fell in the sacred cause of the defence of their firesides and their homes, a monument was decreed to be erected in the centre of the city.

The illuminations throughout the United States had scarcely been extinguished, when news of the most brilliant success was received from the northern frontier. While admiral Cochrane was threatening the sea-coast with devastation, at the request, as he stated, of sir George Prevost, this officer, who was invading the United States in another quarter, held a very different language. While he could direct the British forces to the south to lay waste and destroy, if he really ever gave such directions, he was a great stickler for liberal and honourable warfare on the borders of Canada. His language was of the softest and most conciliatory kind. On entering the state of New-York, "he makes known to its peaceable and unoffending inhabitants, that they have no cause of alarm from this invasion of their country, for the safety of themselves and families, or for the security of their property. He explicitly assures them, that as long as they continue to demean themselves peaceably, they shall be protected in the quiet possession of their homes, and permitted freely to pursue their various occupations. It is against the government of the United States, by whom this unjust and unprovoked war has been declared, and against those who support it, either openly or secretly, that the arms of his majesty are directed. The quiet and unoffending inhabitants not found in arms, or otherwise not aiding in hos-

tilities, shall meet with kind usage and generous treatment; and all just complaints against any of his majesty's subjects, offering violence to them, to their families, or to their possessions, shall be immediately redressed." There is nothing said of retaliation, nor the slightest hint that the war on the part of the Americans had not been conducted according to the usages of war. With these fair words, sir George, led his army to Plattsburg, about the beginning of September, while the fleet proceeded on his left up the lake, in order that he might make a contemporaneous attack by land and water. Previous to this, little of consequence had transpired in this quarter, excepting an attack on the battery at the mouth of Otter creek, in which the British were repulsed with loss.

The British had been greatly reinforced. During the months of July and August, the army from the Garonne, which had so much distinguished itself under Wellington, arrived in the St. Lawrence; a part being sent up to contend with Brown on the Niagara, the remainder, about fourteen thousand, were organized by sir George Prevost, agreeably to the orders of the prince regent, for the purpose of entering the state of New-York. There is good reason to believe, that this movement had a more important object than a mere inroad; had it been successful, a powerful attempt would have followed from another quarter, on the city of New-York, in order, by seizing the line of the Hudson, completely to cut off the New-England states; perhaps under the gross deception, that the people of those states would submit to be recolonized, or at least withdraw from the union.

After general Izard had marched to the Niagara, the force left at Plattsburg, under general M'Comb, did not exceed fifteen hundred regulars, many of them invalids and new recruits; excepting four companies of the sixth, he had not an organized battalion. The works were in no state of defence, and the stores and ordnance were in great disorder. The British force took possession of Champlain on the third of September, and from the proclamations and impressments of wagons and teams in this vicinity, it was soon discovered that their object was an attack on Plattsburg. Not a minute was to be lost in

placing the works in a state of defence; and in order to create an emulation and zeal among the officers and men, they were divided into detachments, and stationed in the several forts; the general declaring in orders, that each detachment was the garrison of its own work, and bound to defend it to the last extremity. At the same time, he called on general Mooers, of the New-York militia, and arranged with him plans for calling out the militia en masse. The inhabitants of Plattsburg fled with their families and effects, excepting a few men and some boys, who formed themselves into a company, received rifles, and were exceedingly useful.

General Mooers, by the fourth of the month, having collected about seven hundred militia, advanced seven miles on the Beckman-town road, to watch the motions of the enemy, and to skirmish with them as they approached; at the same time to obstruct the road by breaking down the bridges and falling trees. Captain Sprowl, with two hundred men of the thirteenth regiment, was posted at Dead creek bridge, on the Lake road, with similar orders; he was also ordered to fortify himself, two field pieces being attached to his command for the purpose. In advance of this position, lieutenant-colonel Appling was posted with one hundred riflemen, for the purpose also of watching their movements. At day-light on the sixth, it was ascertained that the enemy were advancing in two columns by each of these roads, dividing at Sampson's, a little below Chazy village. The column on the Beckman road approached rapidly; the militia skirmished a little with its advance parties, but which, with the exception of a few brave men, soon broke, and fled in the greatest disorder. A detachment of two hundred and fifty men, under major Wool, had been marched to their support, and to show them an example of firmness; but it was found unavailing.

Finding that the enemy's columns had penetrated within a mile of Plattsburg, orders were received for colonel Appling to return from his position at Dead creek, and fall on the enemy's right flank. The colonel fortunately arrived just in time to save his retreat, and to fall in with the head of a column debouching from the woods.

He poured a destructive fire from his riflemen, and continued to annoy the column until he formed a junction with major Wool. Notwithstanding that considerable execution was done by the field pieces, the enemy still continued to press forward in column; considerable obstructions were, however, thrown in their way by the removal of the bridge, and by the fallen trees: a galling fire was also kept up from the galleys as they passed the creek.

The village of Plattsburg is situated on the north east side of the small river Saranac, near its entrance into lake Champlain, while the American works are situated directly opposite. The town being no longer tenable, the parties of Appling, Wool, and Sprowl, were ordered to retire; which was accordingly done, keeping up a brisk fire until they had got under cover of their works. The enemy then threw their light troops into the houses near the bridge, and annoyed the Americans with their small arms from the windows and balconies, until by a few hot shot the buildings were set on fire. Throughout the day their light troops attempted to drive the guards from the bridge, but they paid dearly for their perseverance, and in an attempt to cross the upper bridge, they were resolutely thrown back by the militia. After the whole of the American troops had crossed the bridges, the planks were taken up, and piled in such a manner as to form a breast-work.

The enemy, now masters of the village, instead of attempting to carry the American works, on the opposite side of the river, which their vast superiority of force might have enabled them to do, contented themselves with erecting works, whence they continued to annoy the Americans, and constantly skirmishing at the bridges and fords. By the eleventh, the fifth day of the siege, a considerable force of New-York and Vermont militia, which had been continually collecting, lined the Saranac, and repelled the attempts of the British to cross, while at the same time, a considerable body was sent to harrass their rear. There was scarcely an intermission to the skirmishes which took place between them and the militia, who acted, after the first day, with great intrepidity. The

American regulars, at the same time, laboured incessantly to extend and strengthen their works. During this time, a handsome affair was achieved by captain M'Glassin, who, crossing the river in the night, assailed the British regulars, more than three times his numbers, stationed at a masked battery, which had been for some days preparing, drove them from their posts, and demolished the works.

The principal cause of delay, which was fortunate for the Americans, was the momentary expectation of the fleet, which was intended to co-operate. On the morning of the eleventh, at eight o'clock, the look-out-boat of commodore M'Donough, announced its approach. It consisted of the frigate *Confiance*, carrying thirty-nine guns, twenty-seven of which were twenty-four pounders; the brig *Linnet*, of sixteen guns; the sloops *Chub* and *Finch*, each carrying eleven guns; thirteen gallies, five of which carried two, and the remainder one gun. The commodore at this moment lay at anchor in Plattsburg bay, and intended in that situation, to receive the enemy. His fleet consisted of the *Saratoga*, carrying twenty-six guns, eight of which were long twenty-four pounders; the *Eagle*, of twenty guns; the *Ticonderoga*, of seventeen; the *Preble*, seven; and ten galleys, six of which carried two, the remainder one gun. Besides the advantage which the enemy possessed, in being able to choose their position, their force was much superiour. The number of guns in the British fleet amounted to ninety-five, and of men, to upwards of a thousand; while that of the Americans was eighty-six, and the number of men, less by two hundred. One of the American vessels had been built with despatch almost incredible. Eighteen days before, the trees of which it was constructed, were actually growing on the shores of the lake.

The American vessels were moored in line, with five gunboats, or galleys, on each flank. At nine o'clock, captain Downie, the British commander, anchored in line, abreast of the American squadron, at about three hundred yards distance, the *Confiance* opposed to the *Saratoga*, the *Linnet* to the *Eagle*; the British galleys and one of the sloops to the *Ticonderoga*, *Preble*, and left division of

the American galleys; the other sloop was opposed to the right division.

In this situation the whole force on both sides became engaged, and at the same moment, as if this had been the signal, the contest commenced between general M'Comb and sir George Prevost. One of the British sloops was soon thrown out of the engagement, by running on a reef of rocks, whence she could not be extricated, while one division of the enemy's galleys was so roughly handled, as to be compelled to pull out of the way. But the fate of this interesting day, on which the two rivals for naval superiority, were for the second time matched in squadron, depended chiefly on the result of the engagement between the two largest ships. The American commodore maintained the unequal contest for two hours, but the greater weight of the enemy's battery seemed to incline the scale of victory, although he suffered prodigiously. The chances against the *Saratoga* were accidentally increased by the commander of the *Eagle*, who not being able to bring his guns to bear as he wished, cut his cable and anchored between the *Ticonderoga* and *Saratoga*, by which this vessel was exposed to a galling fire from the enemy's brig. The guns on the starboard side had, by this time, been either dismounted or become unmanageable; the situation of the enemy was but little better; to both, the fortune of the day depended upon the execution of one of the most difficult naval manœuvres; to wind their vessel round, and bring a new broadside to bear. The *Confiance* essayed it in vain, but the efforts of the *Saratoga* were successful; a stern anchor was let go, the bower cable cut, and the ship winded with a fresh broadside on the frigate, which soon after surrendered. A broadside was then sprung to bear on the brig, which surrendered in fifteen minutes after. The sloop opposed to the *Eagle* had struck to captain Henley some time before, and drifted down the line. Three of the galleys were sunk, the others escaped; all the rest of the fleet fell into the hands of commodore M'Donough. By the time this bloody contest was over, there was scarcely a mast in either squadron capable of bearing a sail, and the greater part of the vessels in a sinking state. There were fifty-five round shot in the hull of the *Saratoga*, and

in the *Confiance* one hundred and five. The *Saratoga* was twice set on fire by hot shot. The action lasted two hours and twenty minutes. The commander of the *Confiance* was killed, with forty-nine of his men, and sixty wounded. On board the *Saratoga* there were twenty-eight killed, and twenty-nine wounded. Of the first, was lieutenant Gamble; and on board the *Ticonderoga*, lieutenant Stansbury, (son of general Stansbury, of Maryland.) Among the wounded, were lieutenant Smith, acting lieutenant Spencer, and midshipman Baldwin. The total loss in the American squadron amounted to fifty-two killed, and fifty-eight wounded. The loss of the enemy was eighty-four killed, one hundred and ten wounded, and eight hundred and fifty-six prisoners, which actually exceeded the number of their captors.

This engagement, so deeply interesting to the two rival nations, took place in sight of the hostile armies. But they were by no means quiet spectators of the scene; a hot engagement was kept up during the whole time; the air was filled with bombs, rockets, sharpshells, and hot balls. Three desperate efforts were made by the British to cross over, and storm the American works, in which they were as often repulsed, with considerable loss. An attempt to force the bridge, was bravely defeated by a detachment of regulars and captain Grosvenor's riflemen. They attempted a ford about three miles above, but were so briskly assailed by a body of volunteers and militia, posted in a wood, that the greater part of the detachment was cut to pieces. The efforts of the enemy naturally relaxed, after witnessing the painful sight, so little expected, of the entire capture of their fleet. The firing was, however, kept up until night; at dusk the enemy withdrew their artillery, and raised the siege. The plans of sir George Prevost were completely frustrated, since the Americans had now the command of the lake; even if he were to possess himself of the American works, it would not serve him in any further design; in the meantime he would be exposed to great danger from the hourly augmentation of the American force. Under the cover of the night, he, therefore, sent off all his baggage and artillery, for which he found means of transportation; and before day the next morn-

ing, his whole force precipitately retreated, leaving behind their sick and wounded. Vast quantities of military stores and munitions of war, were abandoned by them, and still greater quantities were afterwards found hid in marshes, or buried in the ground. They were hotly pursued, a number of stragglers were picked up, and upwards of five hundred deserters came in.

Those of the British army and navy who fell, were interred with the honours of war. The humane attention of the Americans to the wounded, and the politeness and generous attention to the prisoners, were acknowledged in grateful terms by captain Pryng, (who succeeded captain Downie,) in his official despatch to the admiralty.

Thus was this portentous invasion most happily repelled, and another of our inland seas made glorious by the victories of free Americans. The "star spangled banner" waved in triumph on the waters of Champlain, as it did over Erie and Ontario. These noble features in our great empire, will henceforth be viewed with a very different interest from what they heretofore excited.

CHAPTER XIX.

Unanimity of sentiment in Congress—British *sine qua non*—Affairs to the southward—Creek hostilities—Invasion of Louisiana—Affairs of the gunboats—British forces landed in Louisiana—Battle of the twenty-third of December—Battle of the eighth of January—The British compelled to retreat—Bombardment of fort St. Philip—Peace with Great Britain.

THE national legislature convened under very different feelings from those that had existed in this body for many years past. Party spirit, it is true, was not altogether at an end, but no other course remained but an union in devising the best means for carrying on the war, which had become a war of defence. Whatever difference of sentiment might prevail with respect to the past, and as to the men in power, there was but little as to the course to be pursued in future. The great cause of the most

bitter complaint against the administration, French influence, was at an end, and the recent conduct of Great Britain towards this country, rendered it impossible for any one to say that she was not wantonly pursuing hostilities, when these causes no longer existed. No one could now be the advocate of Britain.

All felt the neglect with which our ministers in Europe had been treated, suffering them to remain for months unnoticed, shifting the place of negotiation, and with a duplicity unbecoming a great nation, endeavouring to prolong, for half a year, a treaty which might have been accomplished in a day. But when the first occurrence which took place on the meeting of the commissioners, was communicated to this country, it produced a burst of indignation from all parties on the floor of congress, and through the union. It was thought, that all hopes of peace were at an end, and the people began to prepare their minds for a long and bloody war. From the instructions which our commissioners had received, they were authorized (in consequence of the pacification of Europe, and the necessity of Great Britain for resorting to impressment no longer existing, having already more seamen in the service than she required) to pass the subject of impressment in silence for the present: this was in fact nothing more than the request made after the commencement of hostilities, to cease the *practice* of impressment pending the proposed armistice. The practice had now ceased with its alleged necessity. The subject of blockade was also at an end for the present, with the power of Napoleon, and ought not to stand in the way of pacification.

There was nothing, in fact, between the two nations: and our war, which had grown out of the war in Europe, and the injustice practised upon us by both the belligerents from alleged necessity, ought to have ceased with it. Perhaps the government was censurable in this great anxiety for peace; perhaps we ought never to have yielded until some provision had been made by the enemy to prevent the recurrence, at some future period, of the detestable abuses inseparably attendant on the practice of impressing her seamen from our vessels; a practice, which.

had reduced to slavery many thousands of our fellow-citizens. But the nation at this moment required peace; we had suffered much from our inexperience during this first war; a few years repose would enable us to vindicate this principle of eternal justice with a greater hope of success. Besides, it was reasonable to conclude that Great Britain had, by this time, dearly paid for the impressment of our citizens and the confiscation of their property, and that in future she would be cautious how she infringed our rights. It is seldom by compelling an enemy to acknowledge his wrong, that a war is successful; it is by the resistance made, and the injury inflicted, that its object is attained. This sincere wish for peace was not thus met by the British commissioners, who proposed at once, as a *sine qua non*, the surrender of an immense portion of the American territory, and a total relinquishment of the lake shores. These new and unwarranted pretensions excited universal astonishment. Could it be supposed, that the English commissioners, on an occasion like the present, would descend to the trifling artifice of prolonging the negotiation, by proposing terms from which they meant to recede? could they consistently with the dignity of their nation, recede from them? If serious, such proposals argued a surprising ignorance of the situation of the United States, or a disposition to insult them in the grossest manner.

A subject which was brought before the legislature of Pennsylvania, and which received the approbation of all parties in congress, furnished a strong proof of a disposition to unite in the cause of the country. The leaders of the party in the New-England states, opposed to the war, had grown every day more and more intemperate, while the great mass of the people, on the contrary, were become better reconciled. Under a mistaken idea of the real sentiments of the people, a convention was proposed to meet at Hartford, in Connecticut: and, according to the gazettes, its object was no less than a separation of the union. Whatever this may have been, it was soon found, that it was not approved by the majority of any party: the deputies of three states only convened, scarcely representing a third of New-England; and after a short

session, this mighty effort, to destroy, as was supposed, our noble patriotick fabrick, terminated in a declamatory address on subjects long since forgotten, and a remonstrance or petition to the congress of the United States, enumerating stale objections to the federal constitution, and which was presented to the several states for approbation, but every where rejected. In the Pennsylvania legislature, this extraordinary memorial was referred to a committee, and a noble and eloquent report was drawn up by a member of the opposition, in which the causes of complaint were clearly refuted, the constitution ably vindicated, and the conduct of the memorialists severely censured. This attempt to destroy the confederacy of the states, proved only disgraceful to those by whom it was made. Let it be the warm prayer of every American, that this noble fabrick, reared by the hands of sages, and cemented by the blood of patriots, may be eternal! The American has now still greater reason to admire and love the institutions of his country, since the most violent tempest cannot shake this fortress of his safety, which is placed upon a rock. The confederation of these states was an achievement, which transcends almost every effort of human wisdom. How much bloodshed has it not saved already, and how much will it not save in future? Look at the eternal wars of the Grecian states; for, unfortunately, it is but too true, that neighbouring independent powers are naturally enemies. What strength does not this glorious UNION, give to each individual state, and what consequence to each individual citizen, who is thus made the member of a great nation, instead of being one of a petty tribe? The mind cannot contemplate this subject without being filled with the most magnificent conceptions: eternal infamy to the wretch, whose heart can harbour so much wickedness against his country, and malignity to his fellow-creatures, as to wish to loosen the bands by which we are made a nation, destined to be one of the greatest on the globe.

Another important affair was brought before congress. In consequence of the capture of Washington, serious apprehensions were entertained that a removal of the seat of government would follow, particularly as it was well

known, that there were a number of enemies to this site. But these fears were soon dispelled; the question was finally put at rest; the veneration for the great father of our republick prevailed over every other consideration, and the city of Washington is now destined for ages, and it is hoped for ever, to be the seat of our national government.

Our finances also appeared to revive, under the indefatigable industry and great abilities of Mr. Dallas, whom the president selected at this critical moment to fill the office of secretary of the treasury. His plans were characterized by the greatest boldness, but were unfolded in so luminous a manner, as to carry conviction to every mind. He may be said to have plucked up the sinking credit of the nation, by the locks. The duties of the secretary at war were, at the same time, discharged by colonel Monroe, in addition to his other avocations; in which undertaking he exhibited no small courage, for it had become a forlorn hope of popularity: he was happily rewarded by the most fortunate success in all his measures, and by the universal applause of his country.

While the American congress was thus occupied, the publick attention was awakened by a most alarming state of affairs to the southward. The Creek war was renewed, and a powerful invasion of Louisiana was threatened. General Jackson, after concluding a treaty with the Creeks, moved his head-quarters to Mobile. Here, about the latter end of August, he received certain information, that three British ships of war had arrived at Pensacola, and had landed a large quantity of ammunition and guns, for the purpose of arming the Indians, and had besides marched into the fort with three hundred troops. He was also informed, that the fleet of admiral Cochrane had been reinforced at Bermuda, and that thirteen ships of the line, with transports, were daily expected with ten thousand troops, for the purpose of invading some of the southern states. On the receipt of this information, he immediately wrote to the governour of Tennessee, calling for the whole quota of that state.

The two vessels at Pensacola having been joined by another, appeared on the fifteenth of September, off fort

Boyer, which commands the entrance to Mobile bay. A proclamation was now issued by colonel Nichols, commanding his majesty's forces in the Floridas, addressed to the inhabitants of Louisiana, Kentucky, or Tennessee. If not intended as a piece of humour, it proved a surprising ignorance of the character of these people. The inhabitants of Louisiana were called upon, to aid the British forces, in liberating their paternal soil from the usurpation and oppression of the Americans, and in restoring the country to the right owners; as if these people would prefer to be a remote colony of Great Britain, a nation whom they hated, to being an independent state, and enjoying the noble privilege of self-government. The topicks addressed to the people of the other states, excited their mirth; and this contemptible buffoonery of colonel Nichols, was thought to do no great honour to his master. It was not long before this officer made an experiment of the persuasive effects of his eloquence. On the fifteenth, at four o'clock in the afternoon, he proceeded to make an attack on the fort, at this time garrisoned by major Lawrence, of the second infantry, with one hundred and twenty men. The batteries were opened upon the enemy and the fire was returned by all his vessels. Before this, a party of one hundred and ten marines, with two hundred Creeks, headed by captain Woodbine, and about twenty artilleryists, had landed in the rear of the fort, where they commenced a fire with a twelve-pounder and a howitzer, but were soon driven from their position. The vessels, after a cannonade of three hours, were compelled to retire with great loss. The commodore's ship, carrying twenty-two thirty-two-pounders, was driven on shore within six hundred yards of the battery, where she suffered so severely, that those on board were obliged to set her on fire, and make their escape; out of a crew of one hundred and seventy, this was effected, however, by only twenty. On board the other ships, which were considerably injured, eighty-five were killed and wounded.

If the waggish proclamations of colonel Nichols had rendered him and his employers ridiculous, his conduct in another quarter was such as to cover him with lasting

infamy. South-west of the Mississippi, in one of the lakes which communicate with the gulf, a nest of outlaws, smugglers, privateersmen, or more properly speaking, pirates,* had fixed themselves on an island, almost inaccessible. These desperadoes, to the number of five or six hundred, were headed by a ferocious fellow of the name of Lafitte. From an accurate acquaintance with all the secret passages to the Mississippi, they could with facility smuggle their booty to New-Orleans, and with their aid an enemy might be guided to the very entrance of the city undiscovered. Lafitte, however, with that lawless boldness of character, mixed something of magnanimity. He had for several years been outlawed, and his establishment had been broken up in the course of the summer, by a detachment under colonel Ross, of the 44th, and a naval force under commodore Patterson; but the force was no sooner withdrawn, than the pirates returned to their old occupation. The British had been solicited to join in extirpating these public enemies, but they declined, probably intending to use them in due season. This had now arrived, and to the disgrace of the British government, an alliance was proposed by colonel Nichols, with extravagant offers of reward to Lafitte! But what was most humiliating to those who could stoop so low, this alliance was indignantly rejected. Lafitte at first dissembled, until he had drawn from the colonel important information, when he dismissed him with disdain, and immediately despatched a messenger to governour Claiborne, who had some time before offered five hundred dollars for his apprehension, and laid before him incontestible proofs of the truth of his declaration. The governour was agreeably surprised at this unexpected trait of generosity, but at first hesitated as to the course to be pursued: on the approach of danger, however, he issued his proclamation, in which he pledged himself, that those engaged in this illicit course of life should be forgiven, provided they would come forward and aid in the defence of the country. This was joyfully accepted by the Barratarians, as they were call-

* They pretended to have uniformly acted as privateersmen, under the flag of Carthage, but they condemned their prizes in their own way.

ed, who tendered their services, and were found eminently useful.

General Jackson having in vain remonstrated with the governour of Pensacola for his unprecedented conduct, determined to march against that place. Having received a reinforcement of two thousand Tennessee militia, which had marched through the Indian country, he advanced to Pensacola, to demand redress. On the sixth of November he reached the neighbourhood of that post, and immediately sent major Peire with a flag, to communicate the object of his visit to the governour; but he was forced to return, being fired on from the batteries. Jackson then reconnoitred the fort, and finding it defended both by British and Indians, he made arrangements for storming it the next day. The troops were put in motion at day-light, and being encamped to the west of the town, the attack would be expected from that quarter; to keep up this idea, part of the mounted men were sent to show themselves on the west, whilst the remainder of the troops passed to the rear of the fort, undiscovered, to the east of the town. His whole force, consisting of a few regulars, a body of militia, and some Choctaw Indians, appeared in view when within a mile of the fort, and advanced firmly to the enemy's works, although there were seven British vessels on their left, and strong batteries of cannon in front. On entering the town, a battery of two cannons, loaded with ball and grape, was opened on the centre column, composed of regulars, and a shower of musketry was poured from the houses and gardens. The battery was soon carried and the musketry silenced. The governour now made his appearance with a flag, begged for mercy, and offered to surrender the town immediately. This was granted, and every protection afforded to the persons and property of the inhabitants. The commandant of the fort refused to surrender until midnight, when he evacuated it with his troops, just as the Americans were preparing to make a furious assault. The British withdrew their shipping, and Jackson, having accomplished his purpose, returned to Mobile.

By the first of September it was reduced to a certainty, that, notwithstanding the negotiations pending at Ghent,

serious preparations were making for a formidable invasion of Louisiana. Governor Claiborne ordered the two divisions of the militia, the first under general Villere, and the second under general Thomas, to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning. He also sent forth an animated address, calling on the inhabitants to turn out *en masse*, for the defence of their families and homes, from the lawless violence of the invader. On the sixteenth of September, a number of the citizens convened in order to devise measures, in co-operation with the civil authorities, for the defence of the country. Mr. Edward Livingston was chosen president of the meeting; and after an eloquent speech, he proposed a spirited resolution, which would repel the calumny of the insinuation, of their being disaffected to the American government, and would prove their determination to oppose the common enemy. This, when made publick, was received with universal demonstrations of applause.

The war had, thus far, been felt in one of the most peaceful portions of the globe, only by its effects on commercial and agricultural prosperity. In consequence of the suppression of trade, and the low price of all kinds of produce, the people had suffered much. The banks had stopped payment, and distresses of every kind in this country of abundance, had begun to be felt. The great mass of the planters, (at least of the French part,) of an amiable and gentle disposition, had paid but little attention to the existing war; the militia could scarcely be said to be organized, much less disciplined or armed. Nothing short of an actual invasion could rouse them. In the city the case was different; from the commencement of the war, as if sensible of the feeble help which they could expect from the general government, they manifested the greatest alacrity in qualifying themselves for taking the field against an invader. Every man capable of bearing arms, had become a soldier, and perhaps in none was there such frequent and elegant displays of well disciplined volunteer companies, dressed in uniform. The wonderful aptitude of the French for the profession of arms, was never more fully exhibited. There were intermingled with them, a number of men who had served in the French

armies. The free people of colour, a numerous class, were permitted, as a privilege of which they were proud, to form volunteer companies and wear their uniform; some of these were natives, but the greater part had been refugees from Saint Domingo. The American and French inhabitants, although sometimes at variance with each other, on this occasion united heartily in dislike to the English, and in a disposition to frustrate their designs.

The chief dependence of the inhabitants for safety, was in the nature of their country itself, being exceedingly difficult of access, for an enemy invading by sea. In front a shallow coast, and the principal entrance a river, which, after crossing the bar is narrow, deep and rapid, and of course so winding, as to render it easily susceptible of being fortified. To the west, the country is composed of impassible swamps, and on the east, the low marshy coast can only be approached through a shallow lake. The most natural defence of such a country, would be gunboats, or vessels drawing little water, and capable of being easily transferred from place to place. At the suggestion of commodore Patterson, a block ship had been commenced, but was not yet completed. Great uneasiness, however, prevailed, on account of the powerful force expected to attack them, and the deficiency of their means of defence. Louisiana had been left by the administration, which had neither money nor men to send, like other parts of the union, to rely chiefly on itself. It was certainly, as it respected men, arms and military works, in a most defenceless condition. The legislature had been convened, but instead of actively providing the means of defence, much of their time was spent in idle discussion.

In these times of general alarm and danger, nothing is of so much importance, as a man at the head of affairs, possessed of firmness and decision of character, in whom all may safely confide. Happily, at this critical juncture, there was found such a man in general Jackson. This officer hastened his departure from Mobile, on hearing of the danger of New-Orleans, and arrived on the second of December. His presence was instantly felt in the confidence which it inspired, and the unanimity and alacrity with which they seconded every disposition of a

man so justly celebrated for activity, prudence and good fortune. With wonderful rapidity, he put in operation all the resources of his fertile genius, for the defence of the country. He visited in person, according to his invariable practice, every point where it might be necessary to erect works to oppose the invaders. All the inlets or bayous, from the Attakopas to the Chef Menteur and Manchack, were ordered to be obstructed. The banks of the Mississippi were fortified by his direction, in such a manner, as to prevent any of the enemy's vessels from ascending, and a battery was erected on the Chef Menteur, so as to oppose the passage of the enemy in that direction. He then called on the legislature, to furnish him the means of expediting the different works which he had marked out. A number of negroes were furnished, and other requisitions promptly supplied. About one thousand regulars were stationed at New-Orleans, which, together with the Tennessee militia, under Coffee and Carroll, were distributed at the most vulnerable points. Colonel Monroe, in anticipation of the approaching danger in the south, immediately after entering on the duties of secretary at war, had forwarded military supplies by the Ohio river, and called on the governours of Tennessee and Kentucky, for a considerable force, to be sent with all possible expedition to Louisiana.

About the fifth of December, certain intelligence was received that the British fleet, consisting of at least sixty sail, was off the coast to the east of the Mississippi. Commodore Patterson immediately despatched five gunboats under the command of lieutenant Catesby Jones, to watch the motions of the enemy. They were discovered in such force off Cat Island, as to induce the lieutenant to make sail for the passes into lake Ponchartrain, in order to oppose the entrance of the British. The Sea-Horse, sailing master Johnson, after a gallant resistance, was captured in the bay of St. Louis. On the fourteenth the gunboats, while becalmed, were attacked by nearly forty barges and twelve hundred men, and after a contest of an hour, with this overwhelming force, the flotilla surrendered. The loss of the Americans was forty killed and wounded; among the latter, lieutenant Spidden, who lost an arm;

lieutenants Jones and M'Keever were also wounded. The loss of the enemy was estimated at three hundred men.

The destruction of the gunboats now placed it in the power of the enemy to choose his point of attack, and, at the same time, in a great measure, deprived us of the means of watching his motions. The commander-in-chief, that no precaution might be wanting, ordered the battalion of men of colour under Lacoste, together with the Feliciana dragoons, to take post on the Chef Menteur, to cover the road to the city from the lake; and captain Newman, of the artillery, who commanded at the Regolets, was ordered to defend that place to the last extremity, in order to prevent the British, if possible, from entering Ponchartrain. Other measures were rapidly adopted. Colonel Fortier, one of the principal merchants of the city, who had the superintendence of the volunteers composed of men of colour, formed a second battalion, which was placed under the command of major Daquin. The legislature appropriated a considerable sum of money, and by means of bounties, which they offered, a number of persons were induced to serve on board the schooner *Caroline* and the brig *Louisiana*. On the eighteenth, the commander-in-chief reviewed the city regiments, and was particularly gratified with the appearance of the uniform companies, commanded by major Plauche. The other battalion, together with a company of light artillery, under lieutenant Wagner, was ordered to the bayou Saint John. An embargo was laid for three days by the legislature; a number of persons confined in the prisons were liberated, on condition of serving in the ranks; and at length the commander-in-chief conceived it indispensable for the safety of the country, to declare martial law, a measure fully justified by necessity. Lafitte and his Barratarians, about this time joined the American forces. The city now exhibited an interesting spectacle; all classes cheerfully preparing for the reception of the invader, and reposing the utmost confidence in Jackson. All was life and bustle, and the female part of the society seemed emulous to share in this affecting scene.

All the principal bayous which communicate with the lake, and the narrow strip of land on the borders of the

Mississippi, through the swamps, had been obstructed. There was, however, a communication with lake Borgne, but little known, called the bayou Bienvenu, used by fishermen; its head near the plantation of general Villere, seven miles below the city. Major Villere had received orders from his father to guard this bayou, and he accordingly stationed a guard near its entrance into the lake, at the cabins of some fishermen. It afterwards appeared, that these wretches had been in the employment of the British. On the twenty-second, guided by them, the enemy came suddenly upon the American guard, and took them prisoners. The division under general Keane, by four o'clock in the morning reached the commencement of Villere's canal, and having disembarked and rested some hours, proceeded through the cane-brake, and by two o'clock reached the bank of the river. General Villere's house was suddenly surrounded, as also that of his neighbour, colonel La Ronde; but this officer, as well as major Villere, was so fortunate as to effect his escape, and hastening to the head quarters, communicated the intelligence.

The alarm-gun was fired, and the commander-in-chief, with that promptitude and decision for which he is so remarkable, instantly resolved on the only course to be pursued, which was, without the loss of a moment's time, to attack the enemy. Coffee's riflemen, stationed above the city, in one hour's time were at the place of rendezvous; the battalion of major Plauche had arrived from the bayou, and the regulars and city volunteers were ready to march. By six o'clock the different corps were united on Rodrigue's canal, six miles below the city. The schooner Caroline, captain Henley, at the same time dropped down the river. The command of general Coffee, together with captain Beale's riflemen, were placed on the left, towards the woods; the city volunteers and men of colour, under Plauche and Daquin; the whole under the command of colonel Ross, were stationed to the right of these; and next to them, the two regiments of regulars, the seventh and forty-fourth; the artillery and marines, under colonel M'Rea, occupied the road. The whole scarcely exceeding two thousand men. The British force at this time amounted to three thousand, and instead of pushing di-

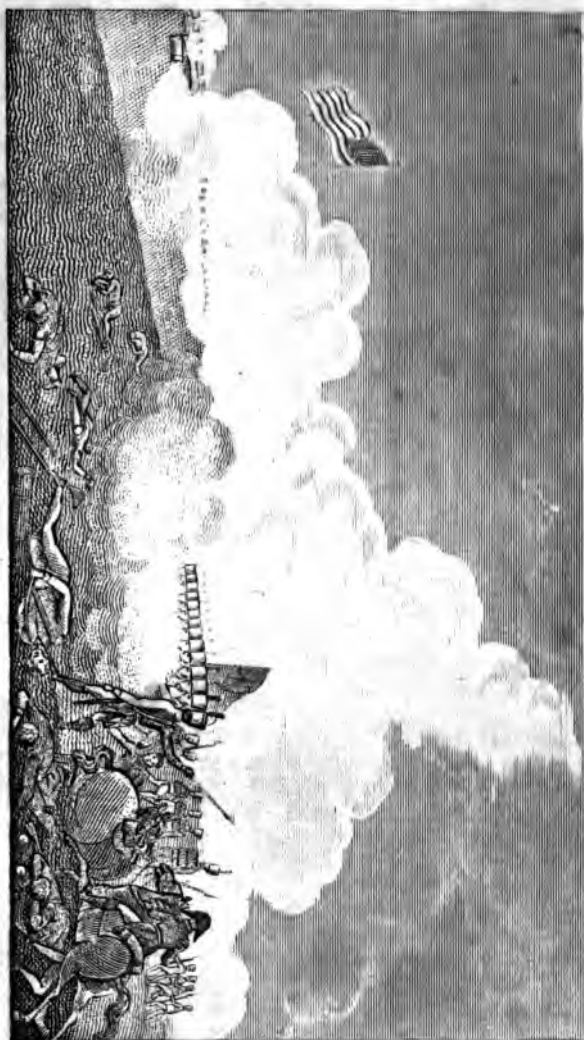
rectly towards the city, had bivouacked, fully convinced that the most difficult part of the enterprise was already achieved. Carroll's force was posted on the Gentilly road, to provide against an attack from that quarter. Coffee was directed to turn their right, which rested on the wood, at the distance of half a mile from the river, while the general assailed their strongest position near it. Commodore Patterson, who had gone on board the Caroline, dropped down at the same time, and was to open his fire upon the enemy as the signal of attack. The first intimation of the approach of the Americans, was a raking broadside from the schooner; their fires extending from the river, enabled the assailants to take deliberate aim. Coffee's men, with their usual impetuosity, rushed upon the right, and entered their camp, while Jackson's troops in front, advanced upon them with great ardour.

The enemy, although taken by surprise, and having several hundreds suddenly killed and wounded, soon formed, and their fires being extinguished, came into action. A thick fog, which arose shortly after, producing some confusion in the different American corps, Jackson prudently called off his troops, lay on the field that night, and at four in the morning, took a position on the other side of the canal of Rodrigue, which had formerly been a mill-race. The American loss was twenty-four killed, one hundred and fifteen wounded, and seventy-four prisoners, among whom were many of the principal inhabitants of the city. Colonel Lauderdale, of Tennessee, a brave soldier, fell much lamented. That of the British, was estimated at four hundred in killed, wounded and missing. They had intended to proceed to New-Orleans the next day, but were induced to be more cautious, having estimated Jackson's force at fifteen thousand men.

The general set to work immediately to fortify his position. This was effected by a simple breastwork, from the river to the swamp, with a ditch in front. To hasten the construction of these works, cotton bags were used, as the cheeks of the embrasures. As the enemy was still annoyed by the Caroline, they set to work in constructing batteries to attack her, and on the twenty-seventh threw hot shot, by which she was set on fire and blown

up, about an hour after she was abandoned by her crew. The *Louisiana*, which then took her station, sustained the fire of all the batteries until in imminent danger: in losing her, the whole co-operative naval force would be lost; her commander, lieutenant Thompson, after encountering many obstacles, finally succeeded in bringing her near Jackson's position. After the destruction of the *Caroline*, sir Edward Pakenham, the British commander-in-chief, having landed the main body of his army, with a sufficient train of artillery, superintended in person the arrangements for fortifying his position. On the twenty-eighth, the British general advanced up the levee in force, with the intention of driving Jackson from his entrenchments, and at the distance of half a mile, commenced an attack with rockets, bombs, and a heavy cannonade, as he approached the American works, which were yet unfinished. The *Louisiana* discharging her broadside upon the enemy's column, caused great destruction; the fire from the American batteries was not less destructive; and after a violent struggle of seven hours, the British general retired. The loss of the Americans was seven killed and eight wounded, among the former colonel Henderson, of Tennessee; that of the British much more considerable.

On the morning of the first of January, 1815, sir Edward Pakenham was discovered to have constructed batteries near the American works, and at day-light commenced a heavy fire from them, which was well returned by Jackson. A bold attempt was, at the same time, made to turn the left of the Americans; but in this the enemy was completely repulsed. The British retired in the evening, from their batteries, having spiked their guns, and leaving behind a quantity of ammunition. The loss of the Americans on this occasion, was eleven killed and twenty-three wounded. On the fourth, general Jackson was joined by two thousand five hundred Kentuckians, under general Adair; and on the sixth, the British were joined by general Lambert, at the head of four thousand men. The British force now amounted to little short of fifteen thousand of the finest troops; that of the Americans to about six thousand, chiefly raw militia, a considerable portion unarmed, and from the haste of their departure,





badly supplied with clothing. All the private arms which the inhabitants possessed were collected, and the ladies of New-Orleans occupied themselves continually in making different articles of clothing. The mayor of the city, Mr. Girod, was particularly active at this trying moment.

The British general now prepared for a serious attempt on the American works. With great labour he had completed, by the seventh, a canal from the swamp to the Mississippi, by which he was enabled to transport a number of his boats to the river: it was his intention to make a simultaneous attack on the main force of general Jackson on the left bank, and crossing the river to attack the batteries on the right. The works of the American general were by this time completed; his front was a straight line of one thousand yards, defended by upwards of three thousand infantry and artillerists. The ditch contained five feet water, and his front from having been flooded by opening the levees and frequent rains, was rendered slippery and muddy. Eight distinct batteries were judiciously disposed, mounting in all twelve guns of different calibres. On the opposite side of the river, there was a strong battery of fifteen guns, and the entrenchments were occupied by general Morgan, with the Louisiana militia, and a strong detachment of the Kentucky troops. To guard against an attack from any other quarter, colonel Reuben Kemper, with a few men, encountering infinite difficulties, had explored every pass and bayou, and on this subject had placed at ease the mind of the commander-in-chief.

On the memorable morning of the eighth of January, general Packenham, having detached colonel Thornton with a considerable force, to attack the works on the right bank of the river, moved with his whole force, exceeding twelve thousand men, in two divisions, under major-generals Gibbs and Kean; and a reserve under general Lambert. The first of these officers was to make the principal attack; the two columns were supplied with scaling-ladders, and fascines. Thus prepared, the Americans patiently waited the attack, which would decide the fate of New-Orleans, and perhaps of Louisiana. The British deliberately advanced in solid columns, over an even

plain, in front of the American entrenchments, the men carrying besides their muskets, fascines, and some of them ladders. A dead silence prevailed, until they approached within reach of the batteries, which commenced an incessant and destructive cannonade: they, notwithstanding, continued to advance in tolerable order, closing up their ranks, as fast as they were opened by the fire of the Americans. When they came within reach, however, of the musquetry and rifles, these joined with the artillery, and produced such dreadful havoc, that they were instantly thrown into confusion. Never was there so tremendous a fire, as that kept up from the American lines; it was a continued stream; those behind loading for the men in front, enabled them to fire with scarcely an intermission. The British columns were literally swept away; hundreds fell at every discharge. The British officers were now making an effort to rally their men, and in this attempt their commander, a gallant officer, general Packenham, was killed. The two generals, Gibbs and Kean, succeeded in pushing forward their columns a second time; but the second approach was more fatal than first; the continued rolling fire of the Americans, resembled peels of thunder; it was such as no troops could withstand; the advancing columns broke, and no effort to rally them could avail: a few platoons only, advanced to the edge of the ditch, to meet a more certain destruction. An unavailing attempt was made to bring them up a third time by their officers, whose gallantry on this occasion, deserved a better fate, in a better cause. Generals Gibbs and Kean were carried away, severely wounded; the former mortally. The plain between the front of the British, and the American lines, was strewed with dead; so dreadful a carnage, considering the length of time, and the numbers engaged, was perhaps never witnessed. Two thousand, at the lowest estimate, pressed the earth, besides a number of the wounded who were not able to escape. The loss of the Americans did not exceed seven killed, and six wounded. General Lambert was the only general officer left upon the field; being unable to check the flight of the British columns, he retired to his encampment.

In the meantime, the detachment under colonel Thorn-

ton succeeded in landing on the right bank, and immediately attacked the entrenchment of general Morgan. The American right, believing itself outflanked, abandoned its position, while the left maintained its ground for some time; but finding itself deserted by those on the right, and being outnumbered by the enemy, they spiked their guns and retired. Colonel Thornton was severely wounded, and the command devolved on colonel Gobbins, who seeing the fate of the assault on the left bank, and receiving orders from general Lambert, re-crossed the river.

On the return of general Lambert to his camp, it was resolved, in consultation with admiral Cochrane, to retire to their shipping. This was effected with great secrecy; and during the night of the eighteenth, their camp was entirely evacuated. From the nature of the country, it was found impossible to pursue them; they left eight of their wounded, and fourteen pieces of artillery. Their loss in this fatal expedition was immense; besides their generals, and a number of valuable officers, their force was diminished by at least five thousand men. It was in vain, as in other instances, to conceal the truth of this affair, and the sensations which it produced in Great Britain, are not easily described; the conduct of the ministry was regarded as shamefully dishonourable, in thus stretching forth one hand to receive the olive, which was tendered by America, and at the same time secretly wielding a dagger with the other.

Commodore Patterson despatched five boats, under Mr. Shields, purser on the New-Orleans station, in order to annoy the retreat of the British. This active and spirited officer succeeded in capturing several of their boats, and in taking a number of prisoners. The glorious defence of New-Orleans produced the most lively joy throughout the United States, mingled, however, with pity, for a brave enemy, who had encountered so disastrous a defeat. The British fleet had, at the same time, ascended the Mississippi, for the purpose of bombarding fort St. Philip, which was commanded by major Overton; but without being able to make any impression.

There is but little doubt that the object of Great Britain, was to possess herself of Louisiana, and obtaining a

session from Spain, draw a cordon round the United States, and by that means strangle this young Hercules, as it were in the cradle. It is well known that on board the fleet, they had brought all the officers necessary for the establishment of a civil government, even a collector of the port! An American must tremble for his country, when he looks back at the danger we have escaped. That the British intended to deliver the city of New-Orleans to be sacked by their soldiery, is very doubtful; and from the high character of sir Edward Pakenham, it is highly improbable that he would have given, as the watchword of the occasion, *beauty and booty*; this was more probably spoken by some of the inferior officers, with a view of producing an excitement among the soldiery.

While these bloody affairs transpired on the Mississippi, admiral Cockburn was pursuing a more lucrative, but less dangerous warfare, in the Carolinas and Georgia. He took possession of Cumberland island, and menacing Charleston and Savannah, he sent out various detachments, several of which were bravely repulsed; but his chief occupation was plundering the inhabitants of their staples, and household furniture. The letters of some of his officers, which were intercepted, display a species of vulgar cupidity, very mortifying to the better class of their countrymen, who could not but feel ashamed of their conduct. The most usual topics of these letters, were the amount and species of plunder which they procured; desks, looking glasses, bureaus, and cotton bales, exultingly enumerated, as if they had been the ultimate glory and end of war.

The momentous intelligence of the defeat of the British at New-Orleans, had scarcely ceased to operate upon the feelings of the people of the United States, when they received the welcome news of peace. These two events were joyfully celebrated, by illuminations throughout this land of freedom and independence.

Thus terminated a glorious and eventful war of three years. It is related of the wise Franklin, that hearing some one speak of our first war with Britain, as *the war of independence*, he reproved him: "Sir," says he, "you mean of the revolution; the war of independence is yet to

come." It is now over; we have burst our bands at last, and every hope on the part of Britain to bring us back to the state of colonies, has fled for ever. She has been taught a lesson which she cannot forget, that it is much cheaper to do justice, than to practise her unwarranted oppressions. If she drove us into a war, by the capture during peace of a thousand of our merchantmen, and the enslaving seven thousand of our fellow citizens, she has found that during war, two thousand of her own ships have been lost, her publick vessels compelled to strike to those of the Americans, and her national debt increased by many millions. She has learned the painful truth, that she has a superiour on the ocean. She has been taught that her threats of burning our towns, and chastising our presumption, would only bring destruction upon her own head; she has seen the market for her manufactures greatly diminished in America—All this might have been saved by a timely repeal of her orders in council, by acceding to the friendly arrangement, so often proposed on our part, to provide against the abuse of the practice of impressment, by which the lieutenant or boatswain of a man of war, could decide, without evidence, and in a moment, upon the life and liberty of an American citizen. We have at last compelled this implacable enemy of our political institutions, to treat us with respect; and an American may own his country with pride, in whatever portion of the globe his fortune may lead him. It is hoped that Britain will at last, treat us as she does other nations, if not with the civility, at least without superciliousness and scorn.

Although a task by no means easy, let us forgive the ungenerous temper with which the last war has been conducted towards us, but let us not forget it; let us keep it in view, until Britain, by her friendly deportment, manifests a wish to atone; let us not hastily charge those enormities upon the British nation; but rather consider them the disgraceful acts of a few ruffian individuals, or at most attribute them to the mistaken policy of a corrupt ministry; let us, believe that every virtuous Englishman condemns them. It is in vain for Britain to tell us that she is fighting the battles of the world, while we see her the

tyrant of the seas; it is in vain to tell us that bulwark of our religion, while she stirs up the savages, to destroy the helpless and the innocent, have no wish to be otherwise than on terms of peace with England, while she refrains from insulting our national independence. We have a common origin, a common language, institutions nearly similar, freed from corruptions and abuse, and to use the elegant language of Milton, we draw light from the same fountain.

To us the war is pregnant with important lessons. We have acquired a knowledge of our weakness and our strength. Our confederation will rise like a pyramid, base eternal. Our best policy is peace, if honour be our aim; war sooner than the slightest insult. Fair and liberal policy to all nations, preferring justice to power, the lesson we have been taught, which was worth the price we have paid for the war, THAT WE ARE WEAK IN THE SUIT OF CONQUEST, BUT ALL POWERFUL IN DEFENSE.

THE END.

Pontiac









